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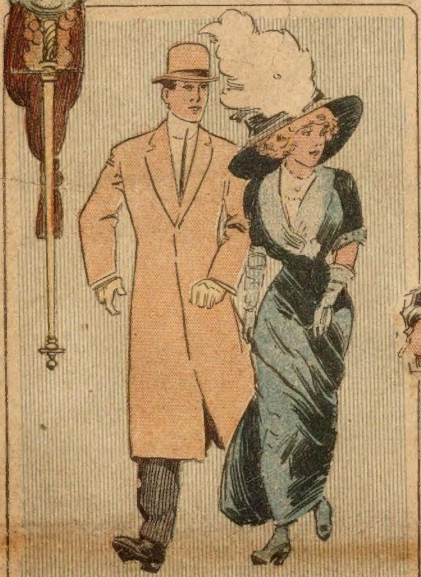
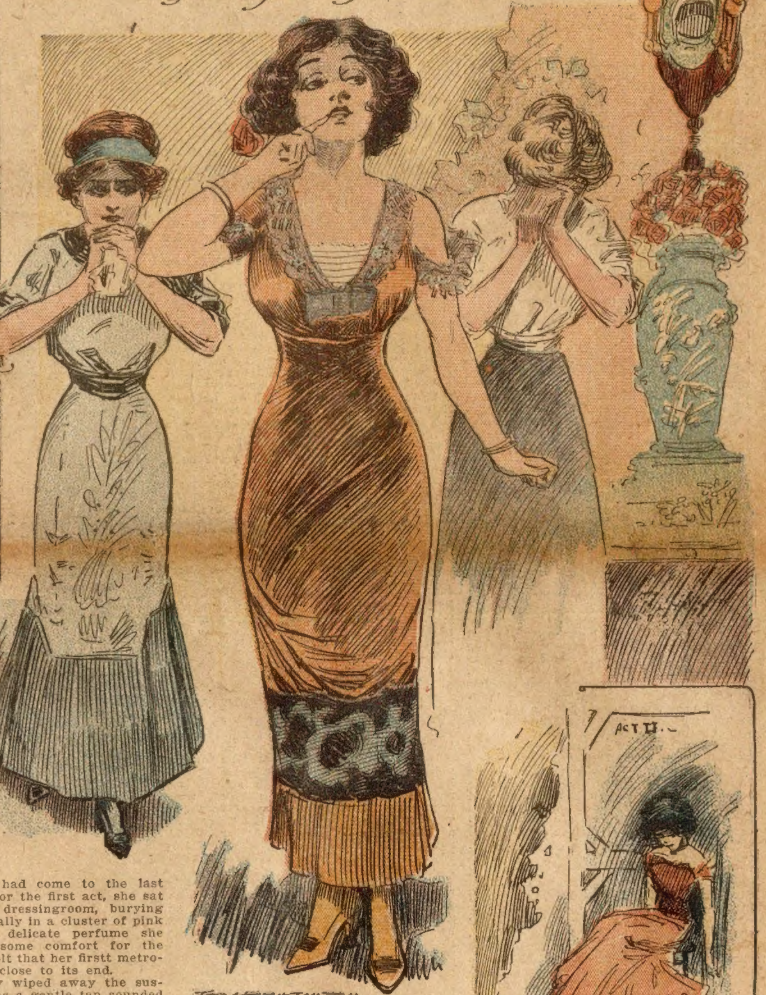
SLAIN ON THE STAGE

or The Minna Gorsden Mystery

By GEO. T. HARGREAVES.





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CHAPTER I.

THE UNANSWERED CUE.

AT WAS the last night's performance in the long run of "The Stain," the greatest success of the New York theatrical season, Madelyne Brinscombe, as the star, had brought the metropolis to her feet in a brilliant impassioned presentation of the heroine.

A talented company had helped to round out her striking conception of the leading character. There was Carson Forbes, the hansome leading man; Chester Hawkins, off the stage a dashing gentleman but in the play a crafty, cruel villain; Homer Betts, solemn as an owl in private life but the creature of constant laughter when behind the footlights; Hazel Carringford, the beautiful woman who played next to the star, and Minna Gorsden, the evil spirit of the drama—capable stage folk all.

Madelyne Brinscombe had needed the deft pen of no clever press agent or the flaunting of no scandalous publicity to draw the throngs to her theater. Her meteoric rise to fame had come in a night but it was fairly won.

To begin with, she was beautiful. An oval face with a firmly molded chin and delicate, dilating nostrils, cheeks of creamy pink and dreamy gray eyes deep set beneath long chestnut eyelashes, made a picture of striking beauty, without the aid of the rouge and paint and wigs of the dressingroom.

Withal, she was modest and demure. The acclaim of a host of admirers and the tributes of the cynical critics of the press had not harmed her natural simplicity or added any affectation to her winsome manner. She had come out of the rural west and invaded the metropolis as one of those passing entertainers—the wooden elocutionist.

Failing to gain the living she had hoped for thus, she sought theatrical agents' offices until a small part came her way.

Her beauty, her modesty, her mellow voice and her expressive face, won the attention of Manager Fohrman. He coached her personally, and when he decided to produce "The Stain," Madelyne Brinscombe was selected for the star part.

The result is stage history. She won the public in the initial performance. She riveted its devotion in the long six months' run which followed.

And now she had come to the last night. Dressed for the first act, she sat in her cramped dressingroom, burying her face occasionally in a cluster of pink roses, in whose delicate perfume she seemed to find some comfort for the regret that she felt that her firstt metropolitan run was close to its end.

But she hastily wiped away the suspicion of a tear as a gentle tap sounded at her door.

"Come in," she said softly.

The astute manager who had first seen her capabilities in the rough and developed them into their present excellence, stepped with a smile into the room.

"Well, my child," he said gently, "are you glad or sorry that the run has ended?"

"Sorry, Mr. Fohrman, oh, so sorry," Madelyne responded with a broken note in her voice. "It will seem like parting from my dearest friend to quit this part."

"I suppose we could have drawn the crowds and filled the house for another months," observed the theatrical magnate," but the weather is getting very warm and you need the long summer's rest. You will need all the strength you can accumulate for next season. Your next part will be more strenuous than this."

"Tell me, tell me," she ejaculated smilingly, "what is it? I am so anxious to know!"

But the call-boy abruptly ended the dialogue.

"Up for the first act, Miss Brinscombe," he said, sticking his frowsy head into the dressingroom.

Madelyne hastened up the stairs to the stage and made her entrance amid a gush of applause. She enacted the role of the daughter who discovers that her father has loved another woman than his wife. That woman, thrown over, plots revenge that will ruin the father and break the daughter's heart.

At the end of the first act Madelyne had to respond to a half-dozen curtain calls. At the end of the second act bushels of flowers were handed over the footlights until she was almost submerged in the dainty and beautiful offerings.

The evidences of public appreciation were so remarkable that the young star went into the powerful third act without her usual self-control. It is here in a paroxysm of love for her parents, and hatred for the woman whose scheme to ruin her home appears on the point of success, that she always rose to superb heights in her denunciation of the plotter.

Almost at the end of the act was the cue for Minna Gorsden, the villainess, to appear. In response to the heroine's frenzied cries: "Where, where, is this evil creature that I may kill her?" she entered to renew her taunts.

But tonight there came no visual answer to the heroine's frantic call. Minna Gorsden failed to respond to her cue.

Madelyne waited in suspense on the half-lighted stage. Embarrassed, she repeated her last lines.

But still Minna Gorsden failed to appear. There was a rush of feet behind the scenes to the spot where Miss Gorsden usually sat awaiting her cue. Then came a hoarse whisper from the stage manager:

Ring down the curtain, quick!"

Frightened, hysterical, the star rushed with the rest of the stage folk to the accustomed place in the wing where the actress, who had missed her cue, awaited her turn.

But Minna Gorsden had responded to her last cue. In the low stool on which she sat, her body now lay limp. When her head was lifted, her face showed white and distorted and her eyes were glazed in death.

Forbes, the leading man, placing his

hand upon her back, to sustain her, felt a strange moistness on his finger tips.

When he raised them to the light, he found they were smeared with blood.

A hasty examination showed that a needle-like weapon had been driven into Miss Gorsden's back as she sat in the wing. The point had evidently reached her heart.

But who had wielded the weapon? And why?

CHAPTER II.

THE POLICE BALKED.

Manager Fohrman, his face strained and white, appeared before the curtain.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began in quivering tones, "owing to a most unfortunate accident to one of the leading members of our company, it will be impossible for the performance to be concluded."

The audience, astonished, rustled slightly but made no move to leave. They seemed waiting for some further explanation.

Fohrman hesitated a moment, studied the footlights intently and then raised his hand as if to command silence from a throng that was already holding its breath in suspense.

"I will add," the manager said, "that we had expected to close 'The Stain' tonight. Instead, it will run all next week. Any one who desires to witness a complete performance may have his tickets exchanged at the box office for any date next week."

For shrewd manager that he was, he quickly recognized that the real tragedy just enacted behind the scenes would be blazoned forth to the extent of pages in the morrow's papers. He could not forgo the chance to reap the profits from so much free advertisement. Public curiosity would crowd his theater to the doors for another week at least.

When he went back of the curtain again, he found the police had arrived. Also an ambulance surgeon in his white duck suit was examining the waxen form of Minna Gorsden, now tenderly laid out on a couch.

Against the face of the victim of the mysterious crime Madelyne Brinscombe had laid one of her choicest clusters of flowers.

The surgeon slit the back of the dead actress's gown, sponged away the coagulating blood and found the wound—a hole not much larger than a pin prick. It was located close to the spinal column and directly back of the heart. He decided that death must have been instantaneous. Then he went away.

The police were soon reinforced by a trio of detectives from headquarters. The first order of the latter was that no one who had been upon the stage at the time of the tragedy should be allowed to leave until given permission.

A long siege of questioning followed. Madelyne, trembling and in tears, was quizzed first. She was absolutely without any ideas as to a possible cause for the horror.

Since she was on the stage and in full view of the audience at the time the fatal blow must have been struck, she was promptly absolved of all suspicion.

Then the detectives ran down the list of performers. Carson Forbes, the leading man, declared he had been in his dressing room at the time Miss Gorsden was struck. Homer Betts had been on the opposite side of the stage, preparing to respond to a cue. Chester Hawkins, the villain of the play, admitted that he had been on the same side of the stage as the stricken woman but that he had not seen her. The minor male actors in the cast cleared themselves of any implication of complicity in the slaying.

Then the women in the play were interrogated. Hazel Carringford, the beautiful but stern creature who had done much to make the success of "The Stain" possible, was found dryly sobbing in her dressing room.

"Why should I know how it happened?" she looked up inquiringly into the official's faces. "Minna and I never liked each other over-abundantly. But to kill her! No, no, that was awful," and the actress lapsed into a broken wail.

"But you can tell us where you were at the time Miss Gorsden is supposed to have received her death wound?"

"Where was I?" Miss Carringford looked up blankly. "Oh, yes, I suppose I must have been leaving the stage. I had just finished my scene a moment before the curtain was wrung down."

"Did you see Miss Gorsden as you left the stage?"

"I did not. I always used one wing to retire by. She used another for her entrance."

"And you are sure you know nothing of the manner of her death?"

She looked up with defiance in her face.

"No, of course not," she declared spiritedly. "If I knew anything I would have volunteered it."

"About this feeling between you and Miss Gorsden? What was it about?" persisted the detectives.

"Oh, a little matter of professional jealousy. It began when we were both young on the stage. We happened to be in the same company and I suppose we envied the applause each other received."

"How long ago was that?"

"Oh, all of fifteen years."

"And how old were you then?"

Miss Carringford glanced up quizzically.

"Trying to discover my age, eh?" she lisped. "Surely you don't want my professional secrets?"

"Well, how old would you judge Miss Gorsden to be then?" came the evading question.

"Oh, about thirty-five, I should say," answered Miss Carringford simply.

"Then you are about thirty-five," suggested the detectives.

The actress flushed through the thin rouge upon her cheeks, but she made no reply.

"Miss Gorsden, we understand, was divorced some years ago," went on the detective. "Do you know anything of the circumstances?"

Miss Carringford considered quite a moment before she replied. Then she said with what appeared to be a forced calmness:

"No, nothing."

Balked here, the detectives next quizzed Annabelle Wesson, the restless soubrette.

"I wish I could help you," she volunteered to the officers. "Minna was one of my best friends."

"Where were you, Miss Wesson, when Miss Gorsden is supposed to have been killed?"

"Why, how do I know when she is supposed to have been killed?" bristled the soubrette.

"Well, where were you at the time she was waiting for her cue, then?"

"Why, I—I usually am just making my exit."

"Through the same entrance in which Miss Gorsden sat?"

"No, always through an exit higher up stage."

"And you saw nothing when you left the stage to indicate that this was about to happen?"

"I would be only too glad to tell you if I had."

"And you know of no motive for this?"

"How should I?" she smirked equivocally.

Unable to obtain a single coherent clue from actors and actresses, the stage hands were questioned. They yielded even less information than the members of the company. Most of them knew Miss Gorsden as a quiet, self-contained woman and a "peach" of an actress. Beyond that, they vouchsafed naught.

The newspaper reporters began to arrive as the detectives, their quizzing ended, started a search for the weapon with which the murder must have been committed.

But neither detectives or reporters found anything or heard anything to shed a single light on the mysterious tragedy. The members of the company were ordered to remain in town in order to attend the coroner's inquest. Beyond that, the police made no move to connect anyone with the crime. Nor, beyond a lot of conjecture that something in the past life of Minna Gorsden had prompted the killing, did the newspapers on the following Sunday morning, albeit they gave columns to the story, have a definite clew, much less a coherent theory.

CHAPTER III.

PRY GETS AN ASSIGNMENT.

On Sunday the Morning Star assigned Phil Pry, its star detective-reporter, to the mystery.

Pry had won a wide reputation for his ability in running down crimes that had baffled the police. He had solved the mysterious Broad street murder, that had given Wall street the shivers for weeks. He had run down the thieves in a one-hundred-thousand dollar jewel robbery, after braving the perils of the boldest and most abandoned den of robbers in the metropolis.

He had solved the mystery in the brutal slaying of the pretty American girl, whose body was found hidden in a trunk in a Chinese den, though it had been necessary for him to enlist the services of his sweetheart, Miss Janet Price, and to venture into the secret underground dens of the Chinese tongs.

He had saved the bride of a night from execution in the electric chair for the murder of her husband. Taking up the case after the police has succeeded in convicting her, he discovered by minute evidence that the wife was innocent. Further, he found the real murderess to be a beautiful Italian with whom the husband had had an affair earlier in life. She was the daring leader of the Black hand in the Metropolis, but Phil Pry dared to venture into her cavernous rendezvous and by clever strategies force her to confess and to yield up her confederates to the law. In the eleventh hour the condemned bride was saved. Here, too, Janet Price rendered vital aid in uncovering the enigma that had balked the police.

Managing Editor Gee of the Star, who had raised Pry from a sharpeyed little office boy to his present height as "star reporter," summoned Phil to his room as soon as he appeared. That was about noon. He had read the overflowing accounts of the Gorsden tragedy in the morning papers, and had come to the office with his head filled with suggestions.

"What do you think of it?" asked the managing editor when he had ordered the door of his room closed.

"Murder," replied Pry.

"No chance of an accident, eh?"

"A thin stilletto doesn't pierce the upper lobe of a handsome actress' heart by accident, Mr. Gee," answered the reporter with a trace of sharpness.

"But the motive?" prodded the superior.

"Plenty of them possible. It could be jealousy or revenge—or convenience."

Mr. Gee looked up in surprise at the last word.

"What do you mean by 'convenience?'" he asked.

"Some one may have had peculiar, even desperate reasons for wanting this Miss Gorsden out of the way."

"That reminds me. We started last night after the news came in to get something of the woman's past life. We found she's been brought up in San Francisco, that her parents were dead, family couldn't be traced. The detectives report that she was divorced some years ago but they have only the authority of gossip in the theatrical company. She seems to have been a good deal of a woman of mystery."

"That divorce tip might develop something worth while. But it would seem as if the provocation were more recent."

"Well, I've instructed our San Francisco correspondent to run down the woman's career there further with particular reference to a divorce. We should know something definite about it by tonight."

"So far as I can make out from the stories printed this morning, there are only three persons who, it seems, will need watching," suggested Pry thoughtfully.

"And they?"

"Chester Hawkins, actor, admits he was on the same side of the stage as the slain woman. Hazel Carringford, actress, admits that she and Miss Gorsden have not been good friends, that they were jealous of each other since they were young on the stage. Annabelle Wesson, actress, admits nothing except that she left the stage about the time Miss Gorsden was killed."

"You eliminate everybody else from suspicion, eh?"

"Yes, until I have had a chance to look these stage folk over."

"The police are pretty much at sea—afraid to make a move."

"Yes," answered Phil with a faint smile, recalling the numerous times in which he had outwitted the guardians of the law in unraveling some intricate mystery or crime, "you might expect that. They can't find a motive by asking questions in this case. And, believe me, a hint as to the motive will be the key to the unlocking of this puzzle. And the only way to get that hint is to live mighty close to these suspected persons we have mentioned."

"You mean by that?"

"That Phil Pry must adopt the stage temporarily."

The managing editor looked puzzled until the reporter explained:

"The only way to get next to things in this case is to get close to the persons involved without their knowing it. Well, I purpose to get on in 'The Stain' somehow so as to study these folk at first hand."

"I know Manager Fohrman very well," volunteered the editor. "He would be glad, I'm sure, to agree to any request I might make. It would mean publicity for him, you know."

"Well, you'll remember that in the second act of 'The Stain' there's a scene where a business office is shown with half a dozen young men and twice as many girl typewriters at work. I want a job as one of those young men."

"I'll write you a note to Fohrman right away," said Mr. Gee, turning to his desk. "He'll give you a job as a 'super' without a doubt."

"Just a minute," interposed Phil, "before you write that. I'm going to need some help in this case—the kind of help that will be able to break the crust of these stage women. That's a job too tough for me."

"You mean that——"

"Miss Price had better be included in that note to Manager Fohrman."

"Can't get along without Miss Price these days, eh?" grinned the managing editor.

Pry flushed but made no reply.

"Well, I don't blame you," said Gee, recalling the day the young woman had come to the Star office to receive a reward for her part in uncovering the Black Hand mystery. "She's certainly a sweet and modest girl."

"Thank you, sir," said the reporter briskly.

The managing editor indited the note to Fohrman and handed it over to Pry. The latter read it carefully.

"Well," he remarked as he stowed it away in a pocket, "I can't tell just how long this stage engagement of mine will last. But I'll make a point of letting you know how things are getting on every day."

"You may have to do things in a hurry," suggested the editor. "They've announced 'The Stain' will continue for a while but Fohrman won't keep it on any longer than it pays, you can bet. As soon as the advertising from this murder wears off and the weather begins to get warm he'll be anxious to close the season."

"I'm making no rash promises," returned Pry, "but if I can't solve this in a week, I never can. So we'll promise you the answer in a week."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST DISCOVERY.

Phil Pry's first mission was to visit Chief of Police Flann.

"No, hardly a thing in the Gorsden case new that you morning paper fellows didn't have," was the chief's brusque reply to the reporter's inquiry.

"Haven't found the weapon she was killed with yet, eh?" queried Phil.

"We've made a search up there to the playhouse," responded the chief as if he resented this examination, "but didn't uncover anything. You don't suppose whoever did that job was fool enough to leave the weapon where we fellows could pounce on it, do you?"

"You never can tell until you hunt," returned the reporter.

"Well, I'm telling you that the weapon wasn't left around to be found. Whoever did that job was a slick one—as slick as any of these crooks they put over in the story books."

"And how about a motive?" persisted Phil. "Have you run across anything along that line?"

"Jealousy, it looks to us."

"But who was jealous enough of her to kill her and run the risk of getting caught at it in such an open place?"

"Oh, these theatrical people are always full of envy or jealousy, particularly the women folks."

"Well, who was jealous of Miss Gorsden?" quizzed the reporter.

"You've got us there, all right," returned the chief stubbornly. "It's harder to get these actor folk to squeal on one another than it is to get a secret society fellow to peach on a brother. When it comes to getting any light out of them, they've got us sewed up. They're willing enough to talk. Anxious to get their names in the papers, I s'pose. But they talk all around the case without coming down to the real goods. The information's there all right, all right, but we ain't able to get it without locking up the whole company and of course, we can't risk doing that."

"Then you're up a stump, unless something very unexpected happens—like a confession or a betrayal, for instance, eh?" volunteered Pry.

"Damned if you don't express it exactly," answered the chief with a disgruntled grin.

"The Star has told me to go ahead and solve the mystery," said Phil modestly.

Chief Flann turned on him gruffly.

"Well, let me tell you, young man, you ain't going to find the answer to this as slick as you did the Broad street murder or that last Black Hand killing. This Gorsden case is going to have us all tied up—and for keeps."

"Maybe," smiled Phil in a way that irritated the police chief.

From police headquarters the reporter went uptown and called on Janet Price. It took little persuasion to gain her consent to participate in his strategy.

"Though I haven't the least desire to go upon the stage," she concluded winsomely.

"No, I'm going to have a steadier job for you soon," Phil's laughing eyes betrayed his sober face. "I'm going to rent a little apartment and install you as its queen," and he drew her face fondly down upon his shoulder and pressed his lips against her night-black hair.

For, their marriage having long since been decided upon, Phil took his greatest pleasure in thinking and talking of the time when it should come to pass.

Together they journeyed to the office of Manager Fohrman. He was busy, largely in superintending the construction of press notices to boom "The Stain." It seemed strange to make such use of the tragedy in a woman's life but there was no denying the fact that the volatile public was now fairly sweating to see the show again and across the footlights behold the actor folk around whom popular suspicion was coiling in the murder.

But Fohrman was not too busy to give heed to a request from the managing editor of one of the leading morning papers of the city. He read Mr. Gee's note twice and then turning to Phil said:

"You are Mr. Pry, and this is Miss Price?"

Phil nodded assent.

"Very well, he went on after a moment's thought, "I'll give you both a chance to go on as supers in the second act. Report at the stage door at seven this evening. We're to have a rehearsal to give Miss Lawson, the understudy of Miss Gorsden, a chance to go through her part. There won't be much for you to do and you'll catch on very quickly."

At seven Phil and Janet sought the stage door and after some parley with the aged and crabbied doorkeeper were admitted to the stage.

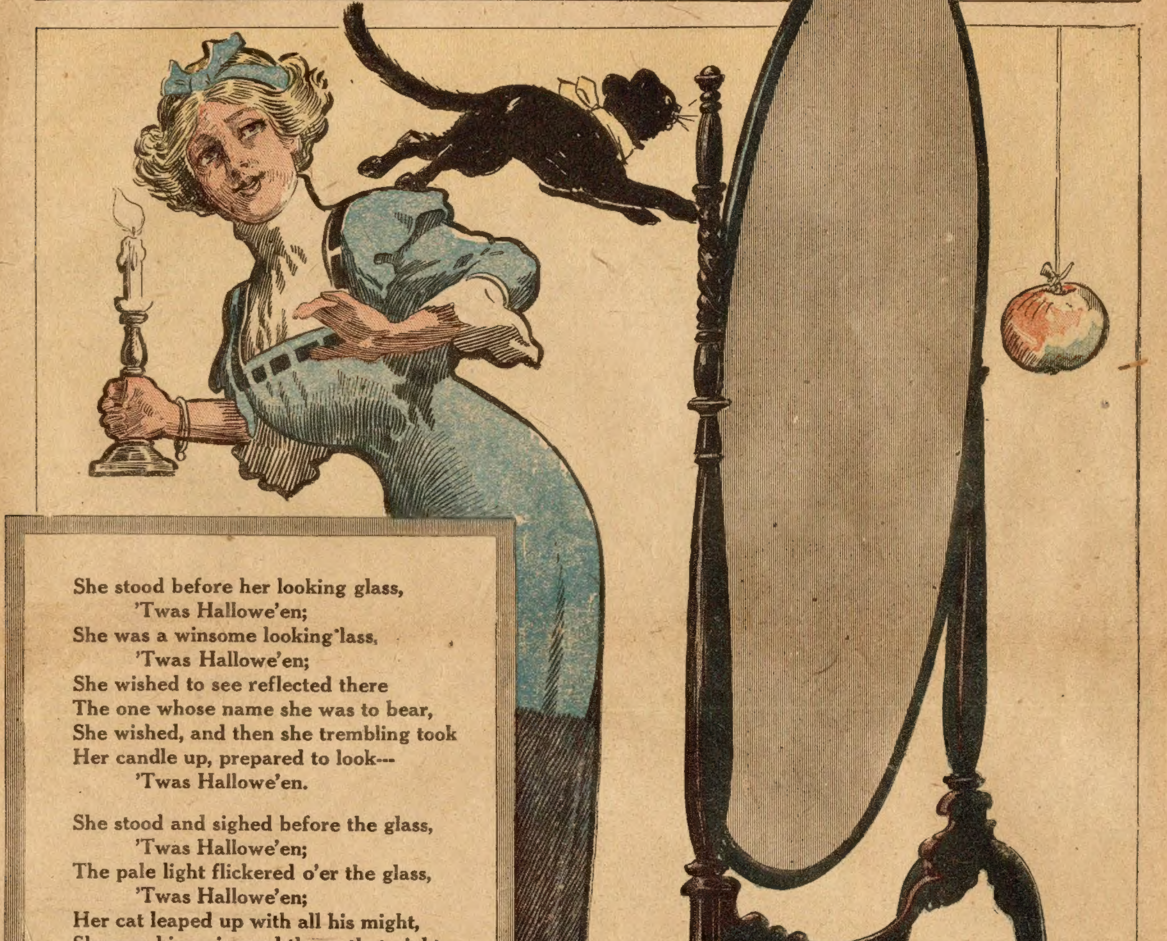
It was set still with the same scene that had filled it when the performance of Saturday night was so abruptly ended. There was only a half light on and the new additions to the company found their way about the tangle of ropes and pulleys and the dim wings with difficulty.

But Phil lost no time in getting to work. He found the spot, by inquiring of a gruff stage hand, where Miss Gorsden had been struck down. The space in the entrance in which she had sat was about three feet. A similar space lay in the entrance immediately behind, a heavy painted canvas wing separating the two.

Phil examined the situation thoroughly. He had plenty of time for

(Continued on page 4.)

HALLOWE'EN



She stood before her looking glass,
'Twas Hallowe'en;
She was a winsome looking lass,
'Twas Hallowe'en;
She wished to see reflected there
The one whose name she was to bear,
She wished, and then she trembling took
Her candle up, prepared to look---
'Twas Hallowe'en.

She stood and sighed before the glass,
'Twas Hallowe'en;
The pale light flickered o'er the glass,
'Twas Hallowe'en;
Her cat leaped up with all his might,
She saw him mirrored there; that night,
One of the name of Tom proposed,
And then the incident was closed---
'Twas Hallowe'en.

Hallowe'en Test.

For the candle test use the colored tapers for Christmas trees. Two sets must be provided, one for the girls and one for the boys. Each candle is numbered by a small card tied to it. From other "fortune bags"—one for boys and one for girls—the guests draw larger cards, which are numbered on one side and on the other bear a fortune verse. Each guest matches the number of this card with the card on the candles. Then the tapers are all lighted at a big "need-fire" candle provided for the purpose, and the guests, gathering in a circle, read their destinies by the light of the colored tapers. For instance, No. 1 may be a green candle, and the holder may read:

Your sweetheart will jilt you just as sure
As this green candle burns down;
And you'll waste your wealth, and live and die
The crustiest "bach" in the town.

Or a girl may hold this one:

Here's a fortune taper green
By its twinkling light is seen
Many things to come to you—
Bags with money bursting through,
Beaux a-plenty to your string
And a golden wedding ring.

Pink candle:

If pink is the candle you've chosen tonight,
There's a marriage for money and riches in sight.

Red candle:

This is the red candle's prophecy;
"You'll boss him, whoso'er he be;
When you put on your bridal wreath
You'll take the bit between your teeth."

White candle:

Many good things for your future life
This moon-white taper shows;
A bank account and a coach and four
And a wife with a turned-up nose.

Or:

You hold tonight a candle white,
And by the radiance shed
A lover will come to you
Ere many moons are sped.

These verses may be legion.

Slain on the Stage.

(Continued from page two.)

though the rehearsal had been called for seven o'clock and it was now past that hour, actors and actresses with their proverbial procrastination had not yet put in an appearance.

Pry obtained a stool, the same one in which Miss Gorsden had sat before the death blow. He placed the stool in the exact spot it had occupied on the preceding night.

"Now, Janet," he said, "please sit down there a few moments and let us try to re-enact last night's affair."

Miss Price took the vacant stool.

"Now lean back," Phil instructed. Janet did as he bade. Her back rested against the wing. In that position it would have been impossible for any one in the same entrance to have inflicted the death wound.

"If I stand to the right or to the left or to the front of you," Pry observed thoughtfully, "I could not jab a weapon into your back. Therefore the person who struck Miss Gorsden must have struck her from behind, in other words from the next entrance."

Janet nodded her approval of her lover's deduction.

"Now," went on Phil, encouraged by the light in the girl's eyes, "let us take another step. First, let me borrow one of your hatpins." Janet handed the pretty ornament with a puzzled air. "Now," continued the reporter, "you lean back against the wing here and I will go into the next entrance. I will feel where the weight of your back causes the canvas to bulge. I will feel just about where your spinal column is. Then I will force this hatpin through the wing and see where it will strike. When you feel the sharp tip strike your skin, just quietly say 'Ouch!' for I don't want to hurt you."

"I see your purpose now," said Janet. "What a brilliant idea."

"We'll know later whether it is or not," responded Phil.

The experiment was promptly made. Pry, retiring into the next entrance, rubbed his fingers along the canvas of the wing until he found the outlines of Miss Price's back. Then in the gray light he carefully figured just the middle of that back. Then he slowly slid the hatpin through the painted canvas.

The sharp point encountered no difficulty for an instant later he heard the low, sweet voice on the other side murmur, "Ouch!"

He darted back with a half-smile.

"Where did it strike you?" he asked hurriedly.

"Right here," Janet replied, lifting her thumb to her back and indicating a spot directly over her heart.

"So far, so good," declared the reporter. "Now we'll try something else. This canvas shows no signs outwardly of having been pierced but I've got a better test. I'm going there again and light a match. You scan carefully on this side and observe whether there is any hole beside this one we have just made through which you can distinctly see the light from my match. If you can just say 'Ouch' again."

Phil had barely struck the match before he heard the "Ouch" from the other side of the wing.

Returning to Janet's side he found her holding her forefingers over two separate places.

"I saw two distinctly but only two," she reported. "These are the holes," and she nodded to her fingers.

The first one she uncovered Phil found to be the one made when he thrust the hatpin through. But the other, a bit higher up, was considerably larger.

"That's it," he declared decidedly.

"The hole made by the weapon that killed Miss Gorsden?" Janet asked in an awed whisper.

"Exactly," returned Pry. He struck another match and under its flickering light examined the hole more minutely.

Against the green grass that the scene painter had depicted on the canvas of the wing, he made out the faint trace of a drop of red.

"Miss Gorsden's blood," he said solemnly, pointing to the tiny splotch. "We've at least solved how she was slain, anyway, haven't we, little girl?"

CHAPTER V.

THE STAINED STILETTO.

Having settled in his own mind just how Miss Gorsden had been murdered and inwardly felicitated himself that his discovery was a victory over the slow-moving police, Phil next turned to another phase of his inquiry.

"Having discovered how it was done," he commented to Janet, "we'll now endeavor to learn with what it was done. It wasn't a hatpin because the hole in the canvas here is too large. Yet it is not large enough for a dagger or any other kind of knife I know of."

The reporter scanned the surroundings sharply. One or two persons who from their natty attire he assumed to be actors had come in and engaged in low conversation he readily conjectured to refer to the tragedy of the previous night.

"Janet," Phil observed quietly, "you understand your part in this affair is to try to scrape acquaintance with Miss Brinsombe, Miss Carringford and Miss Wesson, the leading women members of this company and from them try to learn something of its private life. It's going to be hard to do that for these actor folk look askance at such as we. Yet, it is only through learning the conditions prevailing among the members of this company that we can hope to pick up the clew that will show which one is involved in this murder."

"I'll do my best," returned the girl simply.

"Your best will be plenty good enough for me," Pry assured her heartily. "And now I'm going to leave you to your own resources for a while."

"And what are you going to do?"

"Try to find the knife that made that hole," he said, pointing to the incision in the canvas of the wing.

On a small placard posted near the iron stairway that led to the dressing-rooms below the stage, Phil found what he needed—the allotment of these rooms.

"Chester Hawkins—No. 5," he read. "That's the one I'll try first. He's the likeliest clew—among the men, at least."

Accordingly, the reporter bolted down the stairway and made his way along the dimly lighted corridor that divided the two long tiers of dressing rooms. At the door inscribed "5" he stopped and applied his ear to it to discover whether any one was within.

No sound arising, he clutched the knob, turned it gently, pushed back the door and stepped within.

He snapped on an electric light, closed the door and looked about. The room was about seven feet square. At one end was a wardrobe hung with men's clothes, evidently the changes of costume for the play. A wide and tall mirror stood against the back wall, so large that when Phil glanced into it he started as he saw himself reflected at full length. Before the mirror squatted a dressing table, a litter of wigs, cosmetics, rouges and face pencils. A broken hand-mirror lay beneath them and near by the remnants of many partially smoked cigarettes.

At the end opposite the wardrobe stood two heavy trunks. Their tops, too, were piled high and carelessly with clothes. A cane chair with a seat of doubtful sustaining ability and an old armchair whose "innards" showed in half a dozen places completed the furnishings of the room.

"Well," observed the reporter under his breath, "they say Chester Hawkins is a regular Beau Brummel off the stage and a mighty slick dresser on it but I'll be blamed if his dressingroom shows it."

To make sure he was in the right room, Phil took the precaution to glance at the addresses of a few envelopes he found tucked into a cubbyhole of the dressing table. They all bore the name "Mr. Chester Hawkins" and the reporter's quick eye noted that the handwriting was all feminine.

He lifted the envelope on the top of the pile and drew out the note within. He read the few lines hastily:

"My Dear Mr. Hawkins.—I have been simply charmed with your acting. You are such a perfect love-maker. I would dearly love to meet you away from the theater."

Phil instantly recognized the signature. "Marye Stellman" was the daughter of a leading banker.

"One of those 'mash' notes that silly young women send to these actors," mumbled the reporter as he thrust the perfumed sheet back into its envelope and dropped that with its fellows. "Now if Pa Stellman knew about that, I'll warrant he'd cut off Marye's allowance of matinee money."

Deftly he began to work through the rest of the dressing table. Wigs and face paints were raised to note whether anything was hidden below them. The drawer was pulled out. In this lay a heap of photographs, a few of them of Hawkins himself but the most of them of women. Nor were they of stage women. Society girls had contributed to the collection and had not hesitated to write upon their backs notes of more or less sickening sentimentality.

"Hawkins is one of these matinee heroes," decided Phil. "And he doesn't appear to be above receiving the attentions of a lot of foolish young women. He's willing to accept their photographs, anyway."

Pry went carefully through the photographs to learn whether one of Minna Gorsden was included in the collection. He knew her calm, handsome face well now from having studied it in the various illustrations which had appeared in the morning papers. But there was no trace of her refined features.

The reporter dove next into the wardrobe. Hastily he ran his hands through coats and trousers and pockets. He was hoping in an indistinct sort of way to find the weapon that had pierced the slain actress' heart. But no trace of it was disclosed here.

Then he attacked the trunks. Flinging back the tops, he delved into their contents. Once, with his head buried in one of them, he heard the sound of approaching footsteps. Hastily he snapped off the electric light and slipped back behind the door. But the footsteps passed on and, after regaining his spent breath, Phil returned to his quest.

But the trunks were no more prolific in a clue than the wardrobe. In the bottom of one of them he came across another collection of sentimental notes from idolizing young women. The reading of one sufficed to give him an idea of the mawkish tone of all of them.

"The women seem to be crazy over him," Phil muttered as he dropped the notes back into their hiding-place and, straightening up the contents of the trunks, closed down their lids.

Next he raised the little rug on the floor and looked beneath. But no discovery rewarded his search. He had about made up his mind to give over the search when a light footstep, as of a woman attracted him. As it stopped at the door of Hawkins' dressingroom, Phil on tiptoe scurried across to the wardrobe and concealed himself behind the numerous garments suspended there.

As the door knob turned and the door swung slowly open, the reporter managed to raise his hand and pry a slit between the garments that hid him. Glueing one eye to the slight aperture, he beheld a handsomely gowned woman step gingerly across the threshold and close the door behind her.

He remembered to have seen the face before. It was strong with many traces of what had undoubtedly been once most striking beauty. Ah, he recalled now. He had seen this woman's picture in the newspapers that morning in connection with the tragedy. She must be an actress, he thought, though he could not remember her name.

Phil saw her glance inquisitively at the glowing electric light bulb as though she could not understand how it came to be lighted. Then she swept an inquisitive look about the room as if expecting to find it occupied. Apparently satisfied that it was not, she stole toward a far corner of the room and bent over something apparently concealed there. Then, with a bitter flash in her brilliant eyes, she hurried out.

The door was no sooner closed than Phil dashed from his hiding place to the corner the woman had visited. Leaning over a trunk he saw that an umbrella receiver of some gaudy ware stood there. He had missed a sight of it before. A cane and an umbrella stood in the receptacle.

He drew the umbrella out and ran his fingers along its silken outer coat. Something hard and less bending than the thin steel ribs met his touch.

With a bounding heart, he opened the umbrella. There in its black fold lay a long, exceedingly thin stilletto. He grasped it eagerly and ran his eyes along its flashing surface. Close to the keen tip a small, brown blotch showed.

"Dried blood," Phil conjectured as he closed and replaced the umbrella and then, carefully wrapping the weapon in his handkerchief, slipped it within a breat pocket.

This powerful story will be continued in the next week's Ledger. Do not miss reading it. A lot of great and timely stories will appear in the Ledger during the coming months. Send in your subscription and you will find yourself repaid ten times over.

* * *

SO SOON.

Sweet April smiled
And dropped a tear,
Then May beguiled
And June drew near,
With song so sweet,
And then July
And August heat
Came drifting by.
September soft—
October gay,
With leaves aloft
In bright array—
November—stop!
The rhyme must pause.
It's time to shop
For Santa Claus!

* * *

What to Do.

Spirit rappings and occult performances suit the occasion. Have fortune telling by tea-grounds and nut prophecies. Put apples in a tub of water, tie guests' hands behind them and let them "bob" to get the fruit with their teeth. In the tub of water drop letters cut from paper. These if wafted back and forth by the ladies' fans will connect to form the initials of the right "he" to act as supper or dance partner.

To finish the evening turn the light low and give each guest a saucer containing a dessert spoonful of salt, saturate with pure alcohol. Let one apply a match to her saucer and relate a ghostly story while her alcohol burns. As soon as it burns out the story must be continued by the next, and so on until all are burned out.

* * *

Hallowe'en Cake.

Cream one-half cup butter and one and one-half cups sugar, then add one egg and beat until creamy; now add one teaspoonful cinnamon, one-fourth teaspoonful each of cloves, allspice, and mace, one cupful seeded raisins, floured, one cupful sour milk, two cupfuls entire wheat flour, and one-third cup white pastry flour into which sift one-half teaspoonful baking soda; beat thoroughly and bake in a loaf about half an hour. When cool cover with a maple marshmallow icing and decorate with marshmallows cut into quarters. For the icing place one pound marshmallows in a double boiler, add one-half cup water; when melted beat thoroughly and add one tablespoonful baker's chocolate melted and one tablespoonful vanilla extract.

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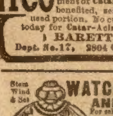

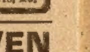

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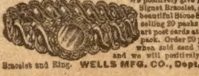

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The Mysterious Detective; *Or, How Keeneyes Hid Himself*

By J. BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

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CHAPTER XIX.

AT THE REVOLVER'S MOUTH.

KEENEYES calmly looked on while Weevely was locking the front door.

Then he remarked, "The back door stands wide open. What is to prevent me from escaping through the vacant lot?"

"Try it and see," was the sinister report.

"I can cry out, and raise the town, Mr. Weevely."

"At the first cry," said Weevely, holding up his revolver, "I will strike you over the head with this."

"And then drag me out into your vacant lot?"

"Possibly."

"And hide my body among the bushes?"

"The bushes would hide it, all right."

"But how would you account for my disappearance?"

"What have I to do with it?"

"My dear," said Keeneyes, smiling, "young Caldwell knows I have come straight here from his place; and Williams knows I intended coming here."

Weevely shrugged his shoulders as he threatened the other. He said: "They'll be glad enough for you to disappear, without asking questions."

"Caldwell won't I've made him my friend. He'll ask questions."

"Mr. Zellers, you must tell me what you charge against me."

"Put down that weapon."

Weevely hesitated.

Presently he compromised by laying it upon his desk, within reach.

"Now, Mr. Zellers, out with it."

"You want me to tell you your secret, after you have said you have no secret?"

"Go ahead!"

"Must I explain your crime, when you say you have committed no crime?"

"Go ahead, I tell you. I am a desperate man, Mr. Zellers, and I shall not wait very long."

Keeneyes hesitated.

He knew that Weevely, of a lower order of intelligence, and now strongly wrought-up, would not calculate results with discrimination.

The detective's life was really in danger. Weevely might shoot him, even if he knew he would be captured and convicted of the deed.

At the same time, the detective had not the remotest idea of the nature of Weevely's crime. He had hazarded on general principles that Weevely had a secret.

Weevely's appearance and eagerness to drive away the other, suggested that he had committed a crime. But what was the crime?

If Keeneyes admitted his ignorance, all hold over this man was gone; if he did not declare the crime, he might be killed.

As usual, in the most critical situations, the detective appeared most self-possessed. It was necessary to try "bluffing."

"Oh, very well, then," said Keeneyes, "since you force me to tell what you have done—have it, then!"

"Go ahead," was the dogged response.

Keeneyes desperately sought to reach the unknown from the known.

"Look [illegible]e, Weevely," he said, "how can you imagine me ignorant of the strange tie that binds together you and the banker? You and Williams are not the same kind of men; your tastes, habits—everything are different. Yet I find you standing together to drive me out of town. You have yourself heard of me; I am known to you as a great detective. What sort of a detective would I be if I couldn't see through the common interest that holds you and Williams together?"

"What interest? Speak plainly, I tell you."

"I am speaking plainly. You heard me speak plainly to Mr. Williams. You heard what I said to him—diamonds."

Weevely grew ghastly pale.

"Yes, cried Keeneyes, "diamonds, diamonds!"

"What about the—the—the diamonds?"

Keeneyes could not have told that, to save his life; however, in order to save his life, he must pretend to know.

"I should warn you, Weevely, that if you meditate my death, it will avail you and Williams nothing; for Mrs. Williams already knows about them, and so does a certain lady whom I might mention, and whom you know, though you may not know where she is."

Weevely cried out hoarsely, "You know!"

"I am glad I have convinced you, Mr. Weevely."

Weevely faltered, "Still, I must find out just how much you know. I have never been connected——" he paused.

"Just so," said Keeneyes easily, and yet you say you have no secret. But remember, the secret is not alone with me. Destroy me, and others will rise up against you."

"I tell you, she stole them herself!" cried Weevely violently.

Keeneyes had a sudden flash of revelation. "No!" he cried, sternly. "I tell you, no!"

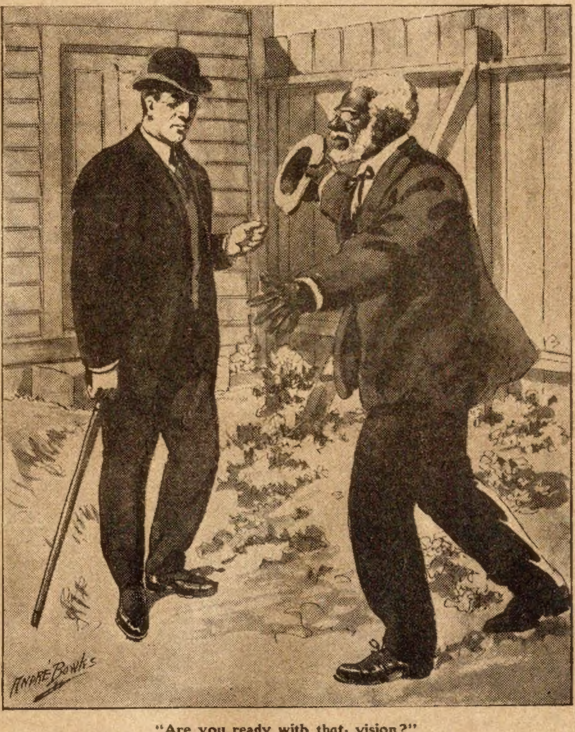
Weevely exclaimed furiously, "Mrs. Williams——"

"I care nothing for that," interrupted the detective, who was now sure of being on the right path. You stole those diamonds yourself, Mr. Weevely!"

Weevely snatched up the revolver, and leveled it at the detective.

CHAPTER XX.

There was a look in Weevely's eye that greatly alarmed the detective. It was the look of utter desperation and recklessness.



"Are you ready with that vision?"

Keeneyes had accused the real-estate agent of stealing diamonds though he was absolutely ignorant of what diamonds were in question. All had been guess work with him. And yet, Weevely's manner showed plainly that Keeneyes had guessed correctly. There could be no doubt that Weevely had stolen diamonds.

Were they the same diamonds that had caused Mrs. Williams' midnight visit to her stepdaughter, now concealed in Caldwell's new house?

That seemed likely enough.

Mr. Williams, too, was much concerned over certain diamonds.? Doubtless they were the same diamonds.

These diamonds curiously bound together, in secret connection, not only the banker and his wife and his daughter, but this real-estate agent who now threatened the detective.

The detective regarded the leveled revolver with apprehension.

"Mr. Weevely, why do you threaten to kill me? I tell you, I am not the only one who knows your secret."

"Who else knows it, then? Come, speak quick, or your life is worth no more than——"

Keeneyes answered confidently, "Uncle Nuzzer."

"Uncle Nuzzer?"

"Yes, the old darky."

"How could Uncle Nuzzer know anything about me?"

"Put down the pistol and I will tell you."

For the second time, the other reluctantly laid his weapon upon the desk.

Keeneyes said, at a venture.

"Uncle Nuzzer saw you hiding these diamonds."

"Saw me?" stammered the other, plainly frightened. "Saw me hiding them?"

"Precisely so."

Weevely reflected.

Then he said with a look of cunning in his eyes, "Then you can tell me where they are."

"No, I can't tell you where they are; but Uncle Nuzzer can tell you where you put them."

"Then he didn't tell you where I put them?"

"He did not."

"That sounds pretty fishy to me."

"Meaning that you don't believe me, Mr. Weevely?"

"Meaning that it don't stand to reason."

"Nonsense. What did I care, where you had put the diamonds? I am not interested in them. You'll hand them over, whenever I say the word."

Weevely gasped in amazed perplexity at this audacity.

"The longer you keep them," remarked Keeneyes carelessly, "the more harm you are doing yourself. Nothing on earth can save you, Weevely, but a full confession to me."

"I haven't got a thing to confess, and I don't know anything about what you have been saying," Weevely suddenly burst forth. "What diamonds are you talking about?"

Keeneyes made a leap toward the desk that held the pistol. Weevely at the same time reached for his weapon.

The movement of each had been made before aware of the other's intention. There was a brief second of intense suspense.

Keeneyes grasped the corner of the desk in time to shake the pistol beyond the other's first movement. The weapon fell to the floor, the desk was sent crashing down upon it, and the two men sprang at each other from over this barrier.

The fall had not exploded the weapon. The desk lay upon it in such manner that it could not be seen.

The men were not so much interested in seizing each other as in preventing each other from getting to the weapon. Keeneyes grasped one wrist of Weevely, at the same time that Weevely grasped a wrist of the detective.

They stood thus an instant, staring at each other, almost breathless, their knees pressing against the overturned desk between them.

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"Those terrible Ear Noises have stopped" is what hundreds of letters are telling me. You remember that on June 17th I offered 300 Treatments for Head Noises, Free, to Chicago Ledger readers and this is the happy result.

Head Noises! What a picture of intolerable suffering these words bring to mind. Reader, if you have Head Noises, I know well that no words of mine can describe the weary misery. But you are the one to appreciate the blessed relief in the words "My Head Noises have stopped." I have been enabled to do this for thousands, and what has been done for others can be done for you, if you will.

The joy and gratitude of the people who received the 300 free treatments offered in this paper last June has been so great and their appeals for friends so urgent that I am going to offer again.

200 Treatments Free

Think of it, you need no longer suffer with these intolerable, roaring noises—the whistling—the escaping steam—the hum of insects—the buzzing—all the weary catalogue of sounds which at times make you feel that they must stop, or you will go insane. Perhaps, too, your hearing is beginning to fail, but whether it has or not, you know in your heart of hearts that it will go and the voice of science warns you in unmistakable terms. **If you Have Head Noises, sooner or later, you will be deaf.**

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When Keeneyes would have twisted Weevely's wrist violently, Weevely made a counter-attack upon the detective's imprisoned wrist.

"We seem equally matched," said Keeneyes, coolly.

"I'll have your life for this!" snarled the other viciously.

There was a knock at the front door.

"Come in," called Keeneyes, cheerily.

"Curse you!" whispered Weevely, between clenched teeth.

An attempt was made at the door, then a voice called, "It's locked, boss."

It was the voice of Uncle Nuzzer.

"I told you he knew where the diamonds were concealed," remarked Keeneyes.

Weevely called. "Go away from my door, you black scoundrel!"

Keeneyes called, "Come around to the back door, Uncle Nuzzer, which is wide open. And come as quickly as you can."

Weevely made a desperate assault upon the detective, but in his ferocious humor lost ground, and was suddenly flung heavily upon his back.

He started up with a snarl, and made a rush at his antagonist.

SHIFT

If Your Food Fails to Sustain You, Change.

One sort of diet may make a person despondent, depressed and blue and a change to the kind of food the body demands will change the whole thing.

A young woman from Phila. says:

"For several years I kept in a run-down, miserable sort of condition, was depressed and apprehensive of trouble. I lost flesh in a distressing way and seemed in a perpetual sort of dreamy nightmare. No one serious disease showed, but the 'all-over' sickness was enough.

"Finally, between the doctor and father, I was put on Grape-Nuts and cream, as it was decided I must have nourishing food that the body could make use of.

"The wonderful change that came over me was not, like Jonah's gourd, the growth of a single night, and yet it came with a rapidity that astonished me.

"During the first week I gained in weight, my spirits improved, and the world began to look brighter and more worth while.

"And this has continued steadily, till now, after the use of Grape-Nuts for only a few weeks, I am perfectly well, feel splendidly, take a lively interest in everything, and am a changed person in every way." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

* * *

Passing It On.

Husband of tomorrow (reviewing wedding presents)—That awful cruet seems familiar.

Wife of tomorrow—Yes, dear, you saw it at the Browns. They got it as a wedding present, and gave it to the Smiths at theirs. It's the Smiths' present. But never mind, dear—Harry's wedding comes off soon."

* * *

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Not That Way.

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"No," answered the young man, "I'd be too much ashamed."

* * *

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CHAPTER XXI.

STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

No sooner had Weevely struck the floor than Keeneyes darted upon the overturned desk. He dashed it to one side. The pistol was exposed to view.

Keeneyes secured it, and pointed it at the on-rushing figure of the real-estate agent. Weevely, with a howl of rage, was brought to a standstill.

The old negro came around the house, and appeared at the back door.

Seeing the condition of affairs, he stopped short, his eyes rolling in alarm.

"Come in, Uncle Nuzzer," said Keeneyes, "I am extending the hospitalities of this place, at present."

The negro slowly crossed the threshold, but had no desire to advance.

Keeneyes carelessly slipped the pistol into his coat pocket, and said to Weevely, "Sit down."

"You scoundrel——" began Weevely, hoarsely.

Keeneyes made a movement as if to take the revolver from his pocket, and Weevely dropped into a seat.

Keeneyes motioned to the negro and said: "Go to him, Uncle Nuzzer, and get the key to the front door from his upper vest pocket, on the right."

The old man tremblingly obeyed. He brought it to the detective.

"Very good," said Keeneyes to the negro. "Let's stroll out into the back lot, you and I. Come along, Uncle Nuzzer. Mr. Weevely you can remain upon your chair, so you won't tire yourself."

Weevely without replying watched the other with murderous eyes.

The detective drew the key from the back door, waved out the negro, then went out himself, and drew the door almost shut. Through the crack he said, mildly: "I wouldn't leave my chair if I were you, Mr. Weevely. If you attempt to break from the house, you would necessarily make a noise, and there would be inquiries and I should feel constrained to explain why I locked you up."

So saying, Keeneyes locked the back door from the outside, then walked a few steps into the lot.

There was a high board fence set all about the lot, so that one could not see over it or between the boards. This gave to the place a privacy, a remoteness, not often found in the heart of town.

The lot, which comprised about two acres, was a perfect tangle of undergrowth, crowded trees, and untrimmed shrubbery.

"Did you ever explore this place, Uncle Nuzzer?" asked the detective, with interest.

"No, sah," was the perturbed reply. "It's too dark and damp to suit me, nohow. You git out amongst all dem weeds and bushes, and you pretty night git lost, sah."

"It would be a good place to hide things," said Keeneyes, thoughtfully.

"Yes, sah, I 'spect it am."

"Did you ever know of anything being hidden here?"

"No, sah. I never been in dis place, since it was sold to Mr. Weevely."

"Uncle Nuzzer, you are interested in finding out about your Miss Sallie Williams. Did you ever hear of any diamonds being stolen from the family?"

"No, sah."

"You know so much about the Williams family, it is strange you don't know about the diamonds."

"I never heerd nothing about 'em, Sah."

"You knew there were diamonds in the family, didn't you?"

"Miss Sallie never had none. I mean, after her pa married agin. She used to have everything she want' till she git a step-ma."

"Did Miss Sallie have diamonds when she was young?"

"I 'spect she had everything, sah."

"Do you know whether she had diamond or not?"

"Not to say that I knows it by rote or quote," answered the other, "but I analyze that if she wanted 'em, she had 'em."

"You are not sure, however, that she owned diamonds?"

"No, sah, but I should suggest that she did."

"You have seen her wear diamonds?"

"I reckon I is, Mr. Zellers; I ain't never give much thought to diamonds, one way or another. I has always been interested in things that seemed nearer home to me."

"Then you know nothing about the family diamonds," said Keeneyes in a disappointed tone. He began to prowl along the overgrown paths closely followed by the old negro.

In the heart of a thicket, he paused, and said abruptly, "Uncle Nuzzer, it was Weevely who stole the diamonds."

"Do he?" exclaimed the other, bewildered. "What ones, sah?"

"The only ones. He stole them. You hear me? He stole them. And you saw him steal them."

"Who, me?"

"Yes, you. He stole them, and you saw him steal them; or, at any rate, you saw him hide them."

"But boss, I ain't never——"

"Do you want to find Miss Sallie Williams?"

"'Course I does."

"Very well. The only way for you to find her, is to admit that you saw Weevely steal, or hide, the diamonds."

"Which ones, boss?"

"The ones that are the cause of Miss Sallie's disappearance."

"But I didn't know they was any diamonds. I never——"

"Come, come, we lose time. Which would you rather maintain; that you saw him steal the diamonds, or that you saw him hide them?"

"I ain't done neither."

"Nevertheless you'll have to make you choice."

"If I say I saw him steal em, I'd have to say who from."

"Naturally."

"If I say I saw him hide 'em, I'll have to say whereabouts."

"Precisely."

"I'd ruther say where than who; it wouldn't be so ticklesome."

"Then you can say you saw him hide them in this vacant lot. You can forget the exact spot, if you want to."

"I might see him in a vision, like," murmured Uncle Nuzzer.

"Just so. You get your vision ready, so you can be handy with it when the time comes. I can assure you that Weevely stole the diamonds. He has just admitted it to me, practically. So you'll be doing no harm to say you saw him hide them."

"Was it in de daytime or de nighttime?" asked the other cautiously.

"That, I do not know," Keeneyes admitted.

"I'se shore I don't, nuther," muttered the other.

"Then don't say which. Let your vision be vague, except on the vital point that you saw the concealment. Are you ready?"

"Ready for what, sah?" asked Uncle Nuzzer, alarmed.

"Are you ready with that vision?"

"Now you mean, boss? You's goin' to git me into trouble, I 'spect."

"No, I'll stand by you. Come back to Weevely's office. And when I ask you anything, you answer according to the way I ask it."

"I don't understand, Mr. Zellers. Wait a minute——"

But Keeneyes had already returned to the back door.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HIDING PLACE.

The detective unlocked the back door and beckoned to Uncle Nuzzer to follow. The old negro obeyed with hesitation.

Weevely still sat in the chair, his face purple with wrath.

Keeneyes walked to the desk, and laid the pistol upon it, just as the real-estate agent had done, some time ago.

"How are you getting along?" Keeneyes asked.

Weevely grunted something unintelligible.

"Now, Mr. Weevely," said Keeneyes, "it will greatly expedite matters if you will give up those diamonds. Tell me where they are, or lead me to them—yes, that will be best. Lead me to them, and I promise you it will be much better for you."

Weevely said nothing.

"Uncle Nuzzer," said Keeneyes, addressing the old man, "did you see Mr. Weevely steal those diamonds, or hide them?"

"Hide 'em, sah," said Uncle Nuzzer, trembling.

"You black rascal," roared Weevely, "if I ever get a chance at you, there'll be one dead nigger in the land!"

"Where did he hide them, Uncle Nuzzer?" asked Keeneyes kindly.

"Boss," said the other, shrinking from before Weevely's petrifying glance, "I don't want to analyze de proposition, sah."

"You see," cried Keeneyes to Weevely. "You have intimidated him! Never mind, poor old uncle, you come with me, where we will be safe, and you shall tell all about it."

Keeneyes took up the pistol, and went to the front.

He unlocked the front door, and opened it wide,

"Come, Uncle Nuzzer, where we can be safe from Mr. Weevely."

"You scoundrel!" cried Weevely to the negro, "what lie have you invented against me?"

"Come on, Uncle Nuzzer," said Keeneyes, "don't pay any attention to him: he doesn't dare get out of his chair, and father we are away, I'll protect you, and you shall tell me everything that you saw."

Uncle Nuzzer was only too glad to get away.

"Hold on there!" cried Weevely furiously. "What lie has the scoundrel invented."

"Eh?" said Keeneyes, pausing in the door.

"What has that nigger been saying?"

"Oh, nothing of consequence. Just about the diamonds, you know."

"I tell you I never stole those diamonds."

"Yes, but Uncle Nuzzer tells another story."

"What story does he tell?"

"He only tells how he saw you hiding them, so if you don't care to discuss it, pray allow me to depart with Uncle Nuzzer."

"But I do want to discuss it. I want to know how much he—I mean, I want to know what he tells."

"Only what he saw."

"What did he see?"

"Uncle Nuzzer," said Keeneyes, ad-

(Continued on page twenty.)

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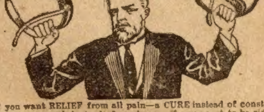

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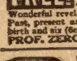

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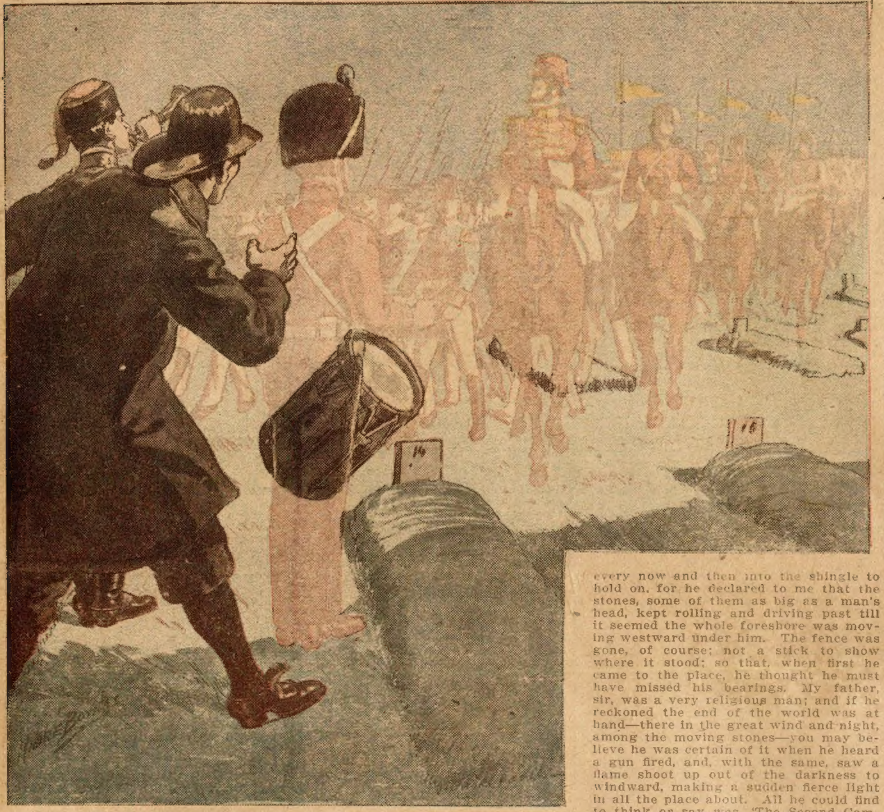

"YES, sir," said my host, the quarryman, reaching down the relics from their hook in the wall over the chimneypiece; "they've hung here all my time, and most of my father's. The women won't touch 'em; they're afraid of the story. So here they'll dangle, and gather dust and smoke, till another tenant comes and tosses 'em out o' doors for rubbish. Whew! 'tis coarse weather, surely."

He went to the door, opened it, and stood studying the gale that beat upon his cottage-front, straight from the Manacle Reef. The rain drove past him into the kitchen, aslant like threads of gold silk in the shine of the wreck-wood fire. Meanwhile, by the same firelight, I examined the relics on my knee. The metal of each was tarnished out of knowledge. But the trumpet was evidently an old cavalry trumpet, and the threads of its party-colored sling, though fretted and dusty, still hung together. Around the side-drum, beneath its cracked brown varnish, I could hardly trace a royal coat-of-arms and a legend running, "Per Mare Per Terram"—the motto of the marines. Its parchment, though black and scented with wood-smoke, was limp and mildewed; and I began to tighten up the straps—under which the drumsticks had been loosely thrust—with the idle purpose of trying if some music might be got out of the old drum yet.

But as I turned it on my knee, I found the drum attached to the trumpet-sling by a curious barrel-shaped padlock, and paused to examine this. The body of the lock was composed of half a dozen brass rings, set accurately edge to edge; and, rubbing the brass with my thumb, I saw that each of the six had a series of letters engraved around it.

I knew the trick of it, I thought. Here was one of those word padlocks, once so common; only to be opened by getting the rings to spell a certain word, which the dealer confides to you.

My host shut and barred the door, and came back to the hearth.

"'Twas just such a wind—east by south—that brought in what you've got between your hands. Back in the year 'nine, it was; my father has told me the tale a score o' times. You're twisting round the rings, I see. But you'll never guess the word. Parson Kendall, he made the word, and he locked down a couple o' ghosts in their graves with it; and when his time came he went to his own grave and took the word with him."

"Whose ghosts, Matthew?"

"You want the story, I see, sir. My father could tell it better than I can. He was a young man in the year 'nine, unmarried at the time, and living in this very cottage, just as I be. That's how he came to get mixed up with the tale."

He took a chair, lighted a short pipe, and went on, with his eyes fixed on the dancing violet flames:

"Yes, he'd ha' been about thirty year old in January, eighteen 'nine. The storm got up in the night o' the twenty-first o' that month. My father was dressed and out long before daylight; he never was one to bide in bed, let be that the gale by this time was pretty near lifting the thatch over his head. Besides which, he'd fenced a small 'taty-patch that winter, down by Lowland Point, and he wanted to see if it stood the night's work. He took the path across Gunner's meadow—where they buried most of the bodies afterward. The wind was right in his teeth at the time, and once on the way (he's told me this often) a great strip of oarweed came flying through the darkness and fetched him a slap on the cheek like a cold hand. But he made shift pretty well till he got to Lowland, and then had to drop upon hands and knees and crawl, digging his fingers every now and then into the shingle to hold on, for he declared to me that the stones, some of them as big as a man's head, kept rolling and driving past till it seemed the whole foreshore was moving westward under him. The fence was gone, of course; not a stick to show where it stood; so that, when first he came to the place, he thought he must have missed his bearings. My father, sir, was a very religious man; and if he reckoned the end of the world was at hand—there in the great wind and night, among the moving stones—you may believe he was certain of it when he heard a gun fired, and, with the same, saw a flame shoot up out of the darkness to windward, making a sudden fierce light in all the place about. All he could find to think or say was, 'The Second Coming! The Second Coming! The Bridegroom cometh, and the wicked He will toss like a ball into a large country;' and being already upon his knees, he just bowed his head and 'bided, saying this over and over.

"But by'm by, between two squalls, he made bold to lift his head and look, and then by the light—a bluish color 'twas—he saw all the coast clear away to Manacle Point, and off the Manacles in the thick of the weather, a sloop-of-war with topgallants housed, driving stern foremost toward the reef. It was she, of course, that was burning the flare. My father could see the white streak and the ports of her quite plain as she rose to it, a little outside the breakers, and he guessed easy enough that her captain had just managed to wear ship and was trying to force her nose to the sea with the help of her small bower anchor and the scrap or two of canvas that hadn't yet been blown out of her. But while he looked, she fell off, giving her broadside to it foot by foot, and drifting back on the breakers around Carn Du and the Varses. The rocks lie so thick thereabout that 'twas a toss up which she struck first; at any rate, my father couldn't tell at the time, for just then the flare died down and went out.

"Well, sir, he turned then in the dark and started back for Coverack to cry the dismal tidings—though well knowing ship and crew to be past any hope, and as he turned the wind lifted him and tossed him forward 'like a ball,' as he'd been saying, and homeward along the foreshore. As you know, 'tis ugly work, even by daylight, picking your way among the stones there, and my father was prettily knocked about at first in the dark. But by this 'twas nearer seven than six o'clock, and the day spreading. By the time he reached North Corner, a man could see to read print; hows-ever, he looked neither out to sea nor toward Coverack, but headed

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straight for the first cottage—the same that stands above North Corner today. A man named Billy Ede lived there then, and when my father burst into the kitchen bawling, 'Wreck! wreck!' he saw Billy Ede's wife, Ann, standing there in her clogs with a shawl over her head, and her clothes wringing wet.

"'Save the chap!' says Billy Ede's wife, Ann. 'What d'ee mean by crying stale fish at that rate?'

"'But 'tis a wreck, I tell 'ee.'

"'I've a-zeed 'n, too; and so has every one with an eye in his head.'

"And with that she pointed straight over my father's shoulder, and he turned; and there, close under Dolor Point, at the end of Coverack town, he saw another wreck washing, and the point black with people, like emmets, running to and fro in the morning light. While he stood staring at her, he heard a trumpet sounded on board, the notes coming in little jerks, like a bird rising against the wind; but faintly, of course, because of the distance and the gale blowing—though this had dropped a little.

"'She's a transport,' said Billy Ede's wife, Ann, 'and full of horse-soldiers, fine long men. When she struck they must ha' pitched the horses over first to lighten the ship, for a score of dead horses had washed in afore I left, half an hour back. An' three or four soldiers, too—fine long corpses in white breeches and jackets of blue and gold. I held the lantern to one. Such a straight young man!'

"My father asked her about the trumpeting.

"'That's the queerest bit of all. She was burnin' a light when me an' my man joined the crowd down there. All her masts had gone; whether they carried away, or were cut away to ease her, I don't rightly know. Her keelson was broke under her and her bottom sagged and stove, and she had just settled down like a sitting hen—just the leastest list to starboard; but a man could stand there easy. They had rigged up ropes across her, from bulwark to bulwark, an' beside these the men were mustered, holding on like grim death whenever the sea made a clean breach over them, an' standing up like heroes as soon as it passed. The captain an' the officers were clinging to the rail of the quarterdeck, all in their golden uniforms, waiting for the end as if 'twas King George they expected. There was no way to help, for she lay right beyond cast of line, though our folk tried it fifty times. And beside them clung a trumpeter, a whacking big man, an' between the heavy seas he would lift his trumpet with one hand, and blow a call; and every time he blew the men gave a cheer. There (she says)—hark 'ee now—there he goes agen! But you won't hear no cheering any more, for few are left to cheer, and their voices weak. Bitter cold the wind is, and I reckon it numbs their grip o' the ropes, for they were dropping off fast with every sea when my man sent me home to get his breakfast. Another wreck, you say? Well, there's no hope for the tender dears, if 'tis the Manacles. You'd better run down and help yonder; though 'tis little help any man can give. Not one came in alive while I was there. The tide's flowing, an' she won't hold together another hour, they say.'

"Well, sure enough, the end was coming fast when my father got down to the point. Six men had been cast up alive, or just breathing—a seaman and five troopers. The seaman was the only one that had breath to speak; and while they were carrying him into the town, the word went round that the ship's name was the 'Despatch,' transport, homeward-bound from Corunna, with a detachment of the Seventh Hussars, that had been fighting out there with Sir John Moore. The seas had rolled her further over by this time, and given her decks a sharp slope; but a dozen men still held on, seven by the ropes near the ship's waist, a couple near the break of the poop, and three on the quarterdeck. Of these three my father made out one to be the skipper; close by him clung an officer in full regimentals—his name, they heard after, was Captain Duncanfield; and last came the tall trumpeter; and if you'll believe me, the fellow was making shift there, at the very last, to blow 'God Save the King.' What's more, he got to 'Send us victorious, before an extra big sea came bursting across and washed them off the deck—every man but one of the pair beneath the poop—and he dropped his hold before the next wave; being stunned, I reckon. The others went out of sight at once, but the trumpeter—being, as I said, a powerful man as well as a tough swimmer—rose like a duck, rode out a couple of breakers, and came in on the crest of the third. The folks looked to see him broke like an egg at their very feet; but when the smother cleared, there he was, lying face downward on a ledge below them; and one of the men that happened to have a rope round him—I forget the fellow's name, if I ever heard it—jumped down and grabbed him by the ankle as he began to slip back. Before the next big sea, the pair were hauled high enough to be out of harm, and another heave brought them up to grass. Quick work, but master trumpeter wasn't quite dead; nothing worse than a cracked head and three staved ribs. In twenty minutes or so they had him in bed, with the doctor to tend him.

"Now was the time—nothing being left alive upon the transport—for my father to tell of the sloop he'd seen driving upon the Manacles. And when he got a hearing, though the most were set upon salvage, and believed a wreck in the hand, so to say, to be worth half a dozen they couldn't see, a good few volunteered to start off with him and have a look. They crossed Lowland Point; no ship to be seen on the Manacles nor anywhere upon the sea. One or two was for calling my father a liar. 'Wait till we come to Dean Point,' said he. Sure enough, on the far side of Dean Point they found the sloop's mainmast washing about with half a dozen men lashed to it, men in red jackets, every mother's son drowned and staring; and a little further on, just under the Dean, three or four bodies cast up on the shore, one of them a small drummer-boy, side-drum and all; and near by part of a ship's gig, with 'H. M. S. Primrose' but on the sternboard. From this point on the shore was littered thick with wreckage and dead bodies—the most of them marines in uniform—and in Godrevy Cove, in particular, a heap of furniture from the captain's cabin, and among it a water-tight box, not much damaged, and full of papers, by which, when it came to be examined, next day, the wreck was easily made out to be the 'Primrose,' of eighteen guns, outward bound from Portsmouth, with a fleet of transports for the Spanish War—thirty sail, I've heard, but I've never heard what became of them. Being handled by merchant skippers, no doubt they rode out the gale, and reached the Tagus safe and sound. Not but what the captain of the 'Primrose'—Mein was his name—did quite right to try and club-haul his vessel when he found himself under the land; only he never ought to have got there, if he took proper soundings. But it's easy talking.

"The 'Primrose,' sir, was a handsome vessel—for her size one of the handsomest in the King's service—and newly fitted out at Plymouth Dock. So the boys had brave pickings from her in the way of brass-work, ship's instruments, and the like, let alone some barrels of stores not much spoiled. They loaded themselves with as much as they could carry, and started for home, meaning to make a second journey before the preventive men got wind of their doings, and came to spoil the fun. 'Hullo!' says my father, and dropped his gear, 'I do believe there's a leg moving?' and running fore, he stooped over the small drummer-boy that I told you about. The poor little chap was lying there, with his face a mass of bruises, and his eyes closed; but he had shifted one leg an inch or two, and was still breathing. So my father pulled out a knife, and cut him free from his drum—that was lashed on to him with a double turn of Manila rope—and took him up and carried him along here to this very room that we're sitting in. He lost a good deal by this; for when he went back to fetch the bundle he'd dropped, the preventive men had got hold of it, and were thick as thieves along the foreshore; so that 'twas only by paying one or two to look the other way that he picked up anything worth carrying off: which you'll allow to be hard, seeing that he was the first man to give news of the wreck.

"Well, the inquiry was held, of course, and my father gave evidence, and for the rest they had to trust to the sloop's papers, for not a soul was saved besides the drummer-boy, and he was raving in a fever, brought on by the cold and the fright. And the seaman and the five troopers gave evidence about the loss of the 'Despatch.' The tall trumpeter, too, whose ribs were healing, came forward and kissed the book; but somehow his head had been hurt in coming ashore, and he talked foolish-like, and 'twas easy seen he would never be a proper man again. The others were taken up to Plymouth, and so went their ways; but the trumpeter stayed on in Coverack; and King George, finding he was fit for nothing, sent him down a trifle of a pension after a while—enough to keep him in board and lodging, with a bit of tobacco over.

"Now the first time that this man—William Tallifer he called himself—met with the drummer-boy, was about a fortnight after the little chap had bettered enough to be allowed a short walk out of doors, which he took, if you please, in full regimentals. There never was a soldier so proud of his dress. His own suit had shrunk a brave bit with the salt water; but into ordinary frock an' corduroys he declared he would not get, not if he had to go naked the rest of his life; so my father—being a good-natured man, and handy with the needle—turned to and repaired damages with a piece or two of scarlet cloth cut from the jacket of one of the drowned marines. Well, the poor little chap chanced to be standing, in this rig out, down by the gate of Gunner's Meadow, where they had buried two score and over of his comrades. The morning was a fine one, early in March month; and along came the cracked trumpeter, likewise taking a stroll.

"'Hullo!' says he; 'good mornin'! And what might you be doin' here?'

"'I was a-wishin',' says the boy, 'I had a pair o' drumsticks. Our lads were buried yonder without so much as a drum tapped or a musket fired; and that's not Christian burial for British soldiers.'

"'Phut!' says the trumpeter, and spat on the ground; 'a parcel of marines!'

"The boy eyed him a second or so, and answered up: 'If I'd a tav of turf handy, I'd bung it at your mouth, you greasy cavalryman, and learn you to speak respectful of your betters. The marines are the handiest body o' men in the service.'

"The trumpeter looked down on him from the height of six-foot two, and asked: 'Did they die well?'

"'They died very well. There was a lot of running to and fro at first, and some of the men began to cry, and a few to strip off their clothes. But when the ship fell off for the last time, Captain Mein turned and said something to Major Griffiths, the commanding officer on

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* * *

Time to Quit.

"I used to sing quite a little," said Mr. Cumrox.

"How did you come to quit?"

"I began to take notice that the audience was inclined to appear sad at the comic opera songs and look tickled at the pathetic ballads."

* * *

To Develop the Bust

To Beauty Editor: I am so ashamed of my thin bust that I want to ask you if there is any harmless way to develop it. My hips and the rest of my body are right for the present styles and I do not want them any larger, but my bust is so flat that I would try anything that gave hope of even three or four more inches development. MARY S.

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* * *

The Fastidious Fish.

"Catch any fish on your trip?"

"No; and I can't understand why. Had a $200 outfit. Had the right kind of hooks and the latest things in flies."

"Maybe your weren't wearing the right kind of hat."

* * *

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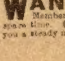

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board, and the major called out to me to beat to quarters. It might have been for a wedding, he sang it out so cheerful. We'd had word already that 'twas to be parade order, and the men fell in as trim and decent as if they were going to church. One or two even tried to shave at the last moment. The major wore his medals. One of the seamen, seeing I had work to keep the drum steady—the sling being a bit loose for me, and the wind what you remember—lashed it tight with a piece of rope; and that saved my life afterward, a drum being as good as a cork until it's stove. I kept beating away until every man was on deck; and then the major formed them up and told them to die like British soldiers, and the chaplain was in the middle of a prayer when she struck. In ten minutes she was gone. That was how they died, cavalryman.'

" 'And that was very well done, drummer of the marines. What's your name?'

" 'John Christian.'

" 'Mine's William George Tallifer, trumpeter, of the Seventh Light Dragoons—the Queen's Own. I played "God save the King" while our men were drowning. Captain Duncanfield told me to sound a call or two, to put them in heart; but that matter of "God Save the King" was a notion of my own. I won't say anything to hurt the feelings of a marine, even if he's not much over five-foot tall; but the Queen's Own Hussars is a tearin' fine regiment. As between horse and foot, 'tis a question o' which gets a chance. All the way from Sahagun to Corunna 'twas we that took and gave the knocks—at Mayorga and Rueda, and Bennyventy.'—The reason, sir, I can speak the names so pat, is that my father learnt 'em by heart afterward from the trumpeter, who was always talking about Mayorga and Rueda and Bennyventy.'—We made the rear-guard, under General Paget; and drove the French every time; and all the infantry did was to sit about in wine-shops till we whipped 'em out, an' steal an' straggle an' play the tom-fool in general. And when it came to a stand-up fight at Corunna, 'twas we that had to stay seasick aboard the transports, an' watch the infantry in the thick o' the caper. Very well they behaved, too—specially the Fourth Regiment, an' the Forty-Second Highlanders, an' the Dirty Half-Hundred. Oh, ay; they're decent regiments, all three. But the Queen's Own Hussars is a tearin' fine regiment. So you played on your drum when the ship was goin' down? Drummer John Christian, I'll have to get you a new pair of sticks.'

"The very next day the trumpeter marched into Helston, and got a carpenter there to turn him a pair of boxwood drumsticks for the boy. And this was the beginning of one of the most curious friendships you ever heard tell of. Nothing delighted the pair more than to borrow a boat off my father and pull out to the rocks where the 'Primrose' and the 'Despatch' had struck and sunk; and on still days 'twas pretty to hear them out there off the Manacles, the drummer playing his tattoo—for they always took their music with them—and the trumpeter practising calls, and making his trumpet speak like an angel. But if the weather turned roughish, they'd be walking together and talking; leastwise the youngster listened while the other discoursed about Sir John's campaign in Spain and Portugal, telling how each little skirmish befell; and of Sir John himself, and General Baird, and General Paget, and Colonel Vivian, his own commanding officer, and what kind of men they were; and of the last bloody stand-up at Corunna, and so forth, as if neither could have enough.

"But all this had to come to an end in the late summer, for the boy, John Christian, being now well and strong again, must go up to Plymouth to report himself. 'Twas his own wish (for I believe King George had forgotten all about him), but his friend wouldn't hold him back. As for the trumpeter, my father had made an arrangement to take him on as a lodger, as soon as the boy left; and on the morning fixed for the start, he was up at the door here by five o'clock, with his trumpet slung by his side, and all the rest of his belongings in a small valise. A Monday morning it was, and after breakfast he had fixed to walk with the boy some way on the road toward Helston, where the coach started. My father left them at breakfast together, and went out to meat the pig, and do a few odd morning jobs of that sort. When he came back, the boy was still at table, and the trumpeter sat with the rings in his hands, hitched together just as they be at this moment.

" 'Look at this,' he says to my father, showing him the lock. 'I picked it up off a starving brass-worker in Lisbon, and it is not one of your common locks that one word of six letters will open at any time. There's janius in this lock; for you've only to make the rings spell any six-letter word you please and snap down the lock upon that, and never a soul can open it—not the maker, even—until somebody comes along that knows the word you snapped it on. Now Johnny here's goin', and he leaves his drum behind him; for, though he can make pretty music on it, the parchment sags in wet weather, by reason of the sea-water getting at it; an' if he carries it to Plymouth, they'll only condemn it and give him another. And, as for me, I shan't have the heart to put lip to the trumpet any more when Johnny's gone. So we've chosen a word together, and locked 'em together upon that; and, by your leave, I'll hang 'em here together on the hook over your fireplace. Maybe Johnny'll come back; maybe not. Maybe, if he comes, I'll be dead an' gone, and he'll take 'em apart an' try their music for old sake's sake. But if he never comes, nobody can separate 'em; for nobody besides knows the word. And if you marry and have sons, you can tell 'em that here are tied together the souls of Johnny Christian, drummer of the marines, and William George Tallifer, once trumpeter of the Queen's Own Hussars. Amen.'

"With that he hung the two instruments 'pon the hook there; and the boy stood up and thanked my father and shook hands; and the pair went out of the door, toward Helston.

"Somewhere on the road they took leave of one another; but nobody saw the parting, nor heard what was said between them. About three in the afternoon the trumpeter came walking back over the hill; and by the time my father came home from fishing, the cottage was tidied up, and the tea ready, and the whole place shining like a new pin. From that time for five years he lodged here with my father, looking after the house and tilling the garden. And all the while he was steadily failing; the hurt in his head spreading, in a manner, to his limbs. My father watched the feebleness growing on him, but said nothing. And from first to last neither spake a word about the drummer, John Christian; nor did any letter reach them, nor word of his doings.

"The rest of the tale you're free to believe, sir, or not, as you please. It stands upon my father's words, and he always declared he was ready to kiss the Book upon it, before judge and jury. He said, too, that he never had the wit to make up such a yarn; and he defied any one to explain about the lock, in particular, by any other tale. But you shall judge for yourself.

"My father said that about three o'clock in the morning, April fourteenth, of the year 'fourteen, he and William Tallifer were sitting here, just as you and I, sir, are sitting now. My father had put on his clothes a few minutes before, and was mending his spiller by the light of the horn lantern, meaning to set off before daylight to haul the trammel. The trumpeter hadn't been to bed at all. Toward the last he mostly spent his nights (and his days, too), dozing in the elbow-chair where you sit at this minute. He was dozing then (my father said) with his chin dropped forward on his chest, when a knock sounded upon the door, and the door opened, and in walked an upright young man in scarlet regimentals.

"He had grown a brave bit, and his face the color of wood-ashes; but it was the drummer, John Christian. Only his uniform was different from the one he used to wear, and the figures '38' shone in brass upon his collar.

"The drummer walked past my father as if he never saw him, and stood by the elbow-chair and said:

" 'Trumpeter, trumpeter, are you one with me?'

"And the trumpeter just lifted the lids of his eyes, and answered: 'How should I not be one with you, drummer Johnny—Johnny boy? If you come, I count; if you march, I mark time; until the discharge comes.'

" 'The discharge has come tonight,' said the drummer; 'and the word is Corunna no longer.' And stepping to the chimney-place, he unhooked the drum and trumpet, and began to twist the brass rings of the lock, spelling the word aloud, so—'C-O-R-U-N-A.' When he had fixed the last letter, the padlock opened in his hand.

" 'Did you know, trumpeter, that, when I came to Plymouth, they put me into a line regiment?'

" 'The Thirty-eighth is a good regiment,' answered the old Hussar, still in his dull voice; 'I went back with them from Sahagun to Corunna. At Corunna they stood in General Fraser's division, on the right. They behaved well.'

" 'But I'd fain see the marines again,' says the drummer, handing him the trumpet; 'and you, you shall call once more for the Queen's Own. Matthew,' he says, suddenly, turning on my father—and when he turned, my father saw for the first time that his scarlet jacket had a round hole by the breast-bone, and that the blood was welling there—'Matthew, we shall want your boat.'

"Then my father rose on his legs like a man in a dream, while they two slung on, the one his drum, and t'other his trumpet. He took the lantern and went quaking before them down to the shore, and they breathed heavily behind him; and they stepped into his boat, and my father pushed off.

" 'Row you first for Dolor Point,' says the drummer. So my father rowed them past the white houses of Coverack to Dolor Point, and there, at a word, lay on his oars. And the trumpeter, William Tallifer, put his trumpet to his mouth and sounded the reveille. The music of it was like rivers running.

" 'They will follow,' said the drummer. 'Matthew, pull you now for the Manacles.'

"So my father pulled for the Manacles, and came to an easy close outside Carn Du. And the drummer took his sticks and beat a tattoo, there by the edge of the reef; and the music of it was like a rolling chariot.

" 'That will do,' says he, breaking off; 'they will follow. Pull now for the shore under Gunner's Meadow.'

"Then my father pulled for the shore and ran his boat in under Gunner's Meadow. And they stepped out, all three, and walked up to the meadow. By the gate the drummer halted, and began his tattoo again, looking out toward the darkness over the sea.

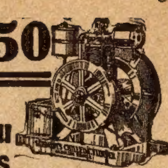
"And while the drum beat, and my father held his breath, there came up out of the sea and the darkness a troop of many men, horse and foot, and formed up among the graves; and others rose out of the graves and formed up—drowned marines with bleached faces, and pale Hussars, riding their horses, all lean and shadowy. There was no clatter of hoofs or accoutrements, my father said, but a soft sound all the while like the beating of a bird's wing; and a black shadow lay like a pool about the feet of all. The drummer stood upon a little knoll just inside the gate, and beside him the tall trumpeter, with hand on hip, watching them gather; and behind them both my father, clinging to the gate. When no more came the drummer stopped playing, and said, 'Call the roll.'

"Then the trumpeter stepped toward the end man of the rank and called, 'Troop Sergeant-Major Thomas Irons,' and the man answered in a thin voice, 'Here.'

" 'Troop Sergeant-Major Thomas Irons, how is it with you?'

The man answered, 'How should it be

(Continued on page 25.)



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GENTLE JABS.

Even some bachelors have their troubles.

Some men are liars, but not all liars are men.

An egotist is a man who thinks he is better than you.

It's awfully hard for dyspeptics to pose as optimists.

Ambition is a longing that makes some men near-great.

And every time a man loses money he loses faith in somebody.

A sure sign that you don't know much is to think you know it all.

A man isn't necessarily a cripple because he offers a lame excuse.

If a man owes a lot to his wife it's because she is a poor collector.

The chronic borrower hopes he'll not meet any of his creditors in heaven.

A woman may have the courage of her conviction, but not of her defects.

Occasionally a woman who doesn't gossip furnishes a lot of material for it.

Some women marry for love, some for a home and a few to spite the other woman.

Few men would trouble themselves to look for work if they didn't need the money.

A woman thinks her husband the wisest man on earth the day he leads her to the altar.

Many a man doesn't realize that he married an angel until she begins to do the harp act.

Winking at trouble is almost as dangerous as winking at the man who dispenses soda water.

A self-made man nearly always looks like the kind of job he might be expected to turn out.

If a man tells a woman she has a musical laugh she will fall for any old joke he may get off.

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Many a man who claims to be as honest as the day is long wouldn't want the searchlight turned on his night record.

Too many people waste their time in condemning the work of others instead of spending it in trying to improve their own.

THE HOUSE OF FEAR;

Or, PLAYING FOR HIGH STAKES

By T. C. HARBAUGH

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CHAPTER V.

CROSS PURPOSES.

IT WAS the morning after my startling encounter with Annabelle in the library.

The leaves were white with frost and over the river beyond the grove hung a heavy mist. Despite my last adventure I had slept a little.

When I arose I went to the window, and drawing aside the curtains, let in the dull light of the new day. Later I slipped down to my solitary breakfast, meeting no one in that strange household, for which I was thankful. I was not expected to join Mr. Gosnold till nine o'clock, and when I entered the library at that hour I found him in his chair, but he was not alone.

A young man whom I had never seen occupied a chair opposite him. He was a prepossessing young person of one and twenty, with a frank, open countenance, which impressed me favorably from the first. As I came forward my employer greeted me with a smile and waved his hand towards his guest.

"This is Reginald, Miss Reynolds," said he, as the young man rose to his feet. "We have been looking for him, but not quite so soon."

"Yes," said the visitor in a self-explanatory manner, "I came last night and took lodging with Brooks. I am glad to know you, Miss Reynolds," and I was certainly pleased to see him, for I instinctively felt that a new ally had entered the House of Fear.

Reginald Gay was one to put a person at his ease, for he was a good conversationalist, and in a few moments we were talking as though we had known each other for years.

I drew from him the fact that he had come to Shadow Farm particularly to see Annabelle. Rostan Gosnold was glad to see him, and before I left the room I knew that he was the girl's lover.

What effect his coming would have on the fortunes of the house I did not know, but I imagined that it would not be pleasant to two of it's tenants—Doctor Dunlape and Teresa Hope. I was to have my impressions confirmed before the day was over.

After a while I returned to my charge and began my duties. While I read to him I called up the adventure of the somnambulist and the chalice. I looked out of the window and caught sight of Reginald Gay and Annabelle on the porch, the girl with a shawl over her head, for the day was cool and damp. Presently they moved away toward the trees and I lost sight of them.

All at once, in the midst of my reading, a singular sound came from Rostan Gosnold's throat, and I discovered that he had turned very white and was lying back in the chair in a dead faint. I sprang to my feet and bent over him.

In another moment I heard footsteps and raised my eyes to behold Doctor Dunlape. He came forward with a dark scowl on his face and lifted his patient's hand.

"A little heart disturbance," said he, raising his dark eyes to mine. "I will bring him round, Miss Reynolds, if you will bring a little fresh water——"

"I will ring for it," I interrupted, for I did not intend to let him be alone with the master of Shadow Farm any more than I could help.

I touched the call-bell and Flavia almost immediately appeared.

"Water," said I, nodding towards Mr. Gosnold, and went back to him.

There was no smarter girl than Flavia, and it seemed that she had not been gone a minute till she returned with the water.

I watched Forbes Dunlape narrowly as he went to work. He took a little black morocco case out of his pocket and began to drop some sort of powder into the tumbler. Not until he had finished did our eyes meet again.

There must have been a challenge in my look, for his eyes suddenly flashed up, and I expected a reprimand.

"How long have you been a nurse?" said he in harsh tones which grated unpleasantly on my ears.

"I have never been a nurse!" I replied with rising spirit. "Mr. Gosnold has prescribed my duties, sir."

"Ah," he ejaculated, stung by my manner. "You came hither in the nature of a companion?"

"That is it," said I. "I am to read to Mr. Gosnold and to be his companion when he is not directly under your care."

"Yes, I understand. I'm afraid I'll have to curtail your duties, for my patient needs almost constant medical attention, and I shall be with him more hereafter."

I did not like this. It would give Doctor Dunlape more power over the master of Shadow Farm, and this was by no means to my fancy.

"I shall obey Mr. Gosnold," I replied. "His word shall become my law," and with this I stepped back and saw the cloud darken on the man's face.

A moment later the door opened and Reginald Gay stood before us.

"What has happened here?" he inquired, glancing at me. "It is nothing serious, I hope."

Doctor Dunlape turned upon the young man with the latent fury of a tiger.

"Who are you?" he demanded, and I saw Reginald's face go white.

"I am Reginald Gay, at your service," was the reply, "and, from what Annabelle has just told me, I presume you are Doctor Dunlape."

"That's my name and you——"

"Oh, sir, I came last night," broke in the young man in a way that diverted me. "Both Mr. Gosnold and Miss Annabelle have expected me."

By this time the medicine which Doctor Dulape had administered had taken effect, and Rostan Gosnold had come out of his swoon. His eyes roved from the dark face of Forbes Dunlape and settled upon mine, seamed with suspense and indignation.

"It was nothing after all, Miss Reynolds," said he with a smile. "You will take up your reading where you left off."

"Not yet," and the hand of Doctor Dunlape fell upon Gosnold's arm. "You need a little rest."

"I?" stubbornly returned the man in the chair. "I am quite myself again."

The dark-faced man bit his lip and turned away.

Thereupon I took up the book which I had laid aside, and resumed my task. Reginald Gay went over to the bookcase and ran his hand over the back of it's contents.

All at once my charge cast a furtive glance towards the young man.

"Miss Reynolds," he said, lowering his voice to an almost indistinct whisper, "what happened while I was in the dark?"

I felt that Doctor Dunlape was in the hall just beyond the open door. I had once encountered him on the staircase and I now believed that he was playing eavesdropper within a few feet of me.

"Nothing very strange happened," I answered, lowering my own voice. Doctor Dunlape came in and brought you out of your faint."

"What did he give me?"

"That I cannot tell."

"What was the bottle like, Miss Reynolds?"

"He administered a white powder."

A long-drawn sigh escaped my charge.

"Miss Reynolds, I wish you would be with me more than usual hereafter. I shall need you at eight and until I retire which shall not be for an hour later than the old time."

"But Doctor Dunlape might object," said I.

He put out his hand and pressed the call-bell. In a moment Flavia entered.

"Doctor Dunlape," said Rostan Gosnold to the girl who went away.

Two minutes later the stately figure of Forbes Dunlape entered the room.

"I am going to make a change in Miss Reynolds's hours, doctor," said the master of Shadow Farm, looking into the man's face. "I want her companionship more hereafter."

"And not my medicine?" said the doctor as his face seemed to change color.

"I do not say that," was the reply, accompanied with a little hauteur.

"I shall not be responsible for what may follow too much recreation," he returned with one of his stiff bows.

"I will be responsible," said Rostan Gosnold. "When Miss Reynolds ceases to interest I can draw on Reginald."

"Very well."

I knew there was a leaping tiger within the man who withdrew, and feeling that I had won a point, I settled back in my chair, with a glance at Reginald Gay, who had turned from the books and was looking on with a question in his eyes.

Two hours afterward, when Mr. Gosnold had kindly dismissed me, I encountered the young man in the hall. He was waiting for Annabelle who was to show him the place, the sun having dispersed the mists and brightened the whole landscape.

"Pardon me, Miss Reynolds," said he, advancing, "what is happening in this house? I am not blind. Who is this Doctor Dunlape and the tall woman whom I met in the grounds an hour ago?"

"Doctor Dunlape is Mr. Gosnold's resident physician and the other one is Teresa Hope."

"Miss Annabelle's instructress?"

"I cannot say in what capacity she came to Shadow Farm," said I. "You have met her, then?"

"Yes, yes," he answered nervously. "Something is wrong here."

Goaded by an impulse which I could not suppress I seized his arm and drew him towards me.

"Something is wrong here," I cried, "terribly wrong! I thank God for your

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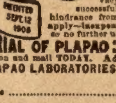

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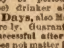

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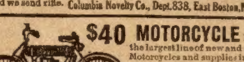

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Well, I didn't like that. I was afraid the horse wasn't "all right" and that I might have to whistle for my money if I once parted with it. So I didn't buy the horse although I wanted it badly. Now this set me thinking.

You see I make Washing Machines—the "1900 Gravity" Washer.

And I said to myself, lots of people may think about my Washing Machine as I thought about the horse, and about the man who owned it.

But I'd never know, because they wouldn't write and tell me. You see I sell my Washing Machines by mail. I have sold over half a million that way.

So, thought I, it is only fair enough to let people try my Washing Machines for a month, before they pay for them, just as I wanted to try the horse.

Now, I know what our "1900 Gravity" Washer will do. I know it will wash the clothes, without wearing or tearing them, in less than half the time they can be washed by any other machine.

I know it will wash a tub full of very dirty clothes in Six minutes. I [illegible] machine ever invented can do that, without wearing out the clothes.

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It just drives soapy water clear through the fibers of the clothes like the force pump might.

So, said I to myself, I will do with my "1900 Gravity" Washer what I wanted the man to do with the horse. Only I won't wait for people to ask. I'll offer first, and I'll make good the offer every time.

Let me send you a "1900 Gravity" washer on a month's free trial. I'll pay the freight out of my own pocket, and if you don't want the machine after [illegible] a month, I'll take it back and pay the freight [illegible]. Surely that is fair enough, isn't it?

Doesn't it prove that the "1900 Gravity" Washer must be all that I say it is?

And you can pay me out of what it saves for you. It will save its whole cost in a few months [illegible] tear on the clothes alone. And then [illegible] 75 cents a week over that in washwoman's wages. If you keep the machine after the month's trial, I'll let you pay for it out of what it saves you. If it saves you 60 cents a week, send me 50 cents a week till paid for. I'll take that cheerfully and I'll wait for my money until the machine itself earns the balance.

Drop me a line to-day, and let me send you a book about the "1900 Gravity" Washer that washes clothes in 6 minutes.

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coming," and I left him with a stare in his eyes.

CHAPTER VI.

I PLAY MY FIRST CARD.

When Reginald and Annabelle departed for their inspection of the grounds, I knew that I had a firm ally in the young man. That Forbes Dunlape and Teresa Hope were leagued against me, I did not doubt. I had come into their sky against their liking, and it was plainly evident that Reginald Gay was not on their list of friends.

The disappearance of the deadly drug from the dark shelf in my father's laboratory must be solved if possible, for I was now aware that the terrible nobi was doing it's work in the House of Fear.

Flavia I could trust. She was a strong and forceful girl, when not excited, and I had already noticed that Brooks liked her. As soon as possible I sent the key to my door to the city and had a duplicate one made. This I placed in Flavia's hands, that she might enter my chamber whenever occasion required, and the tall girl accepted the proffer with a knowing look.

During the next few days I kept my appointments with Rostan Gosnold. He was gradually sinking under the insidious poison which was sapping his life. I knew that I had in my keeping the antidote, but could I administer it without being seen?

The thing that was darkest to me was the strange work of Annabelle during her somnambulism. How had the girl come in contact with the nobi which I had seen her place in her uncle's glass [illegible] administered to herself the same deadly agent? for I had, as the reader knows, detected it's presence in her own goblet.

It was a bond of love that united Reginald and Annabelle. Her spirits rose at his coming, and his presence was an inspiration to her.

One day Doctor Dunlape was suddenly called away by a mysterious telegram. I heard him tell Teresa Hope that he would not return for a whole day, and this promised to be my opportunity. I saw him depart with feelings which I cannot describe.

I had learned that my charge nearly always carried his medicine to his sleeping chamber when he retired, and I resolved to add my antidote to the poison after he had reached his room.

In the short dusk of that day Annabelle suddenly rushed into my room and threw herself on her knees before me. Her face was illumined like a seraph's, and I knew that her heart was a well-spring of joy.

In girlish accents she confessed her love for Reginald, and supplemented it with the statement that her uncle approved of it. I never saw one so happy. Poor child! she did not know of the terror that surrounded her.

When she had gone to her room I stood for a long time at the window, listening to the wind and looking out upon the gathering shades of night.

At last I thought of Rostan Gosnold and hastened to the landing. He had not retired for the night and I wanted to speak to him as was my wont before he was out of sight.

I was midway on the staircase when I saw a figure emerge from the library and come up the stairs. It was too late for me to draw back, so I drew to one side to let the person pass.

I knew that figure at sight. The moment Teresa Hope saw me she gave a little start and fixed her keen eyes upon my face. There was no love between us.

She came up the stairs with the movements of a queen of tragedy, still eying me, and when she came abreast of me she stopped and drew back loftily.

"Your services are not needed any more tonight, Miss Reynolds," came from between her white lips. "Mr. Gosnold has retired to his room."

"Is it not an early retirement?" I asked, returning look for look.

"He is acting under Doctor Dunlape's advice," she said. "I am carrying out his orders."

I could see that her hands were clinched in anger and felt that she would like to fasten those hands in my throat.

"He asked me to see him before he retired," said I. "I was just going down for that purpose."

"It is needless. He is in his room now and I forbid any one to see him before morning."

How coldly supercilious was this beautiful woman, for Teresa Hope was beautiful.

"Very well," I answered, determined not to knuckle to this [illegible]. "I can get a book for night reading, I suppose?"

"If you desire, but no communication with Mr. Gosnold."

She proceeded up the steps and I lost her figure among the shadows beyond.

I descended to the library, but it was empty. A light burned dimly on the center table, and I saw that the chalice was gone. Where it had stood was a rim of moisture and I bent over it. I was saluted by a peculiar odor which reconfirmed my fears.

Perhaps Teresa Hope was watching me from the head of the staircase, so I selected a book and left the library. In another minute I was in my own room, but not to read.

The wind whistled more dolefully than ever. It seemed to send forth a dirge for the old man who was in the shadow of doom.

Presently I heard the laughter of Annabelle in the parlor, where I knew she was with Reginald, and for a moment I thought of rushing down and laying before the happy pair the story of my suspicions.

When midnight came I unlocked my dresser and drew forth the little phial which I had brought from the city. I held it up to the light and read hope in the clear liquid which my father had concocted to break the power of the nobi.

Life was in my keeping, but could I carry out my resolve?

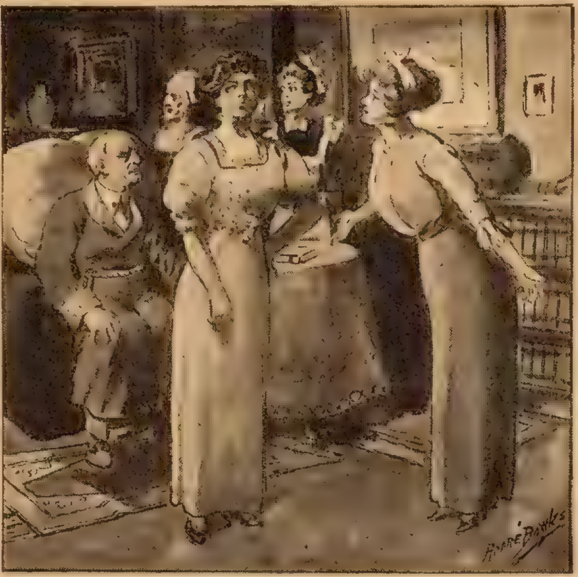
At last the whole house seemed buried in slumber.

Clutching the phial to my bosom I crept forth and went silently down the darkened steps. Once or twice I paused to listen for the feet of the enemy, but not a sound came to break the intense silence.

I entered the library with cautious tread. The light still burned on the table and with eager fingers I lowered it till but the merest speck remained.

Now would I outwit Teresa Hope and her ally.

The door leading off to Rostan Gosnold's sleeping chamber was just across the room, and my eyes became glued upon it. In another second I was at



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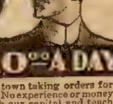

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that portal and my hand noiselessly turned the knob.

The bed-chamber was not so dark but that I could see all it contained.

The high-posted bedstead stood out before me and I saw the recumbent form of my charge thereon. Beside the bed stood the dangerous glass within reach of the sleeper's hand should he awake and put it forth for the nocturnal draught.

My hand trembled against the phial in my bosom.

Cautiously I advanced across the little chamber and drew forth the antidote. Despite my nerve I heard the pulsations of my own heart, but I steadied my hand and held the phial over the glass. Five drops I counted amid that dead silence, five drops of health and vengeance and then restored the phial to it's secretive nest.

The first step had been taken.

For a moment in the light of the night-lamp on the bed stand, I gazed upon the silent figure of the financier, and then turned to leave the room.

The door I closed without the slightest noise. Across the carpet of the library I went secure in my secret. In another minute I would be back in my own room and safe.

I had reached the door leading into the hall when there flashed before me a vision in white and the next instant my wrist was in a grip of steel.

"Wench!"

The word went to my heart like an Indian shaft.

I know it drove every sign of color from my face, and I felt my blood suddenly congeal.

I was looking into the white and terrifying face of Teresa Hope, and her burning eyes were reading the inmost secrets of my soul.

For a moment—it seemed an age—I stood there and looked into those blazing orbs.

"Where have you been?" demanded Teresa as she leaned forward till her lips seemed to scorch my cheek.

"I have been to Mr. Gosnold's room," said I, returning her glare. "I—I thought I heard a sound in his chamber——"

"You are not his doctor. I am in charge here," said she.

"I know, but——"

"It was your duty to waken me if you heard any sound," she interjected.

"I did not wish to disturb you," said I which was true.

Her grip tightened on my wrist. The delicate white fingers seemed to eat their way to the bone.

"Wait for orders," she continued. "Remember that you are his amusement, not his physician."

"Yes," I bowed.

Her hand fell away as suddenly as it had gripped me and I was free.

I passed her and placed my foot on the first step of the stair. I knew that her gaze was still riveted upon me.

There was no other word, not even the conventional good night, and when I flung myself into my chair in the recesses of my little chamber, I wondered if Teresa Hope suspected.

CHAPTER VII

THE FRINGE OF DOOM.

I had not been long in my room when a thought of Annabelle suddenly flashed across my mind. I sprang up, wondering if the girl would again repeat her startling trance walk which I had witnessed in the library.

With the thought on my mind I slipped away and listened at the girl's door. Her breathing did not reach my ears and I opened the portal and peered inside. The bed was not occupied.

In another instant I was trembling on the stair, collecting my ideas and almost afraid to advance further. But at last down I went and looked into the master's idle room. The light still burned faintly on the table, but Annabelle was not to be seen.

Surely, I thought, the girl had not left the house.

At one time I thought of rousing Flavia, but not being sure of the girl's self-control, I gave over the idea and let myself quietly out of the house.

It was past midnight and the moon was sailing through a network of fleecy clouds which covered the ground with a horde of fantastic phantoms.

On the porch I paused for a moment, and then catching sight of something white down among the trees, I darted thither. In a moment, however, I lost sight of the object, but, resolved to have the adventure out, I pressed on a little further.

Not far away the ground sloped suddenly till it terminated in a cliff at the foot of which, fifty feet below, lay a mass of volcanic-like rocks.

As I neared this point I beheld to my horror the object of my solicitude standing on the very fringe of the precipice with the glowing moonlight full upon her white figure.

I drew back with a cry of terror in my throat.

I knew that another step would precipitate Annabelle to her death, and believing that she was in one of her somnambulistic trances, I fully expected to see her take the fatal plunge.

Almost at the same moment I beheld another figure, not many feet away, half-concealed by one of the lordly oaks. My gaze became fixed on this second object, and I soon made out that it was Teresa Hope watching the young girl without dreaming of my presence.

She seemed to be regarding Annabelle without the slighest intention of rescuing her from her perilous position, and my heart gave a leap or horror when I discovered this.

At last, to my infinite joy, the fair sleep walker drew back from the cliff and to the left. Teresa Hope left her ambush and followed her with the stealthiness of a wild beast.

What did this woman mean?

I waited till she was some distance away, and then I glided after her.

All at once I heard a strange, heart-rending cry, and saw Teresa Hope pause and look wildly around. Annabelle had stepped into an abrupt depression and fallen on her face, which had wakened her, and the cry I had just heard had pealed from her throat.

I saw Teresa Hope rush forward, but she did not reach the startled girl. Instead she stopped short, and with a face full of wickedness continued to watch her.

She seemed to gloat over Annabelle's terror at having found herself out of the house at such an hour, and I felt like rushing on and taking the poor distracted girl in my arms. But the barrier between us was Doctor Dunlape's companion, and this was all that held me back.

Suddenly down through the wood from towards the house came a running figure. I knew at once that it was Brooks, and the moment he caught sight of Annabelle he caught her up and looked into her face.

She snuggled close to his stalwart form with her arms trustingly about his neck, and from that moment I thought more of David Brooks than ever.

As the giant turned with Annabelle's head on his shoulder, his roving eye fell upon the figure of Teresa Hope, half-hidden by one of the trees, and I saw him stride towards her.

Seeing that she was caught, my enemy advanced and spoke.

"You forestalled me," I heard her say, but Brooks gave her a look I shall never forget, and drew back.

"You were not helping her," he said coldly. "You were stationary when I saw you."

"But your coming frightened me a little, for I did not know who you were."

Teresa Hope offered to care for the trembling girl, but David Brooks drew still further away.

"I'll take her home, Miss Hope," he said. "I'll put her to bed with my own hands."

"What, you?"

"Yes, you shall not touch her," and for those words I could have kissed the man who held Annabelle in his arms.

For a moment Teresa Hope glared at him like a leopardess, then she fell away with a smile of haughty disdain.

"I shall report your conduct to Doctor Dunlape when he returns," she said.

"Do, miss. I am not amenable to Doctor Dunlape for my conduct. I am hired by Rostan Gosnold."

He strode away in triumph, and I saw Teresa Hope clinch her hands while she gazed after him.

All at once she turned and walked towards the cliff over which Annabelle had almost fallen. The leaves were moist with the dews of early morning, and eager to see what would be the final outcome of my adventure, I flitted silently behind her.

She went straight to the cliff and planted herself firmly on its fringe with the moonlight on her face. That face was white and the lips were welded closely together.

From where she stood she had a fine view of the mist-encircled valley which lay between her and the river. A cool wind fanned her face, and she stood there in the full moonshine like an ancient queen, as beautiful a silhouette as I had ever seen.

Suddenly one of her hands flitted to her bosom and drew forth a bit of folded paper which she began to tear into bits. I knew that the fragments fluttered downward to fall among the rocks at her feet, and when she had destroyed the paper she turned away.

So near me did she pass that I could almost have touched her with my hands. She was breathing hard like an exhausted runner, and I watched her till the trees hid her form.

There was, as I had discovered not long before, a narrow path which led to the rocks and in a few moments I was hurrying down it to land at length where the rocks were.

Bits of paper lay at my feet and with eager hands I began to gather them up. Some, of course, had escaped me by getting among the rocks, but I soon had a handful, which I thrust into the bosom of my dress.

I was full of chill when I finished my task, and went wearily towards the House of Fear. It loomed dark and ghostly among the half-naked trees, and I let myself in with a shudder.

There was a dim light underneath

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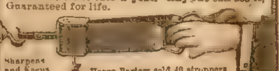

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Annabelle's door and my curiosity led me forward.

The poor girl was asleep, her face half-bathed in pale moonlight, and I saw that whoever had put her to bed had not had the gentle and practiced hands of a woman.

I remained but a little while in that chamber, tucking the covers snugly about Annabelle, and then went away. I was halfway to my own next, when a door suddenly opened and I stood looking at the tall figure of Teresa Hope

"You again?" she exclaimed as she came toward me. "What means this midnight business?

I did not reply, but drew myself up disdainfully and returned look for look.

"I will see that you get your dismissal" she continued in the same strain "We will have no spies at Shadow Farm."

I had to pass her in order to reach my own room, and setting my lips hard I went forward

"You heard me, did you not?" she again shot into my very teeth. "We will have no spies here."

"Very well"

Other words rushed to my lips, but I resolutely beat them back. The time had not yet come for them.

She watched me till I had placed my hand on my doorknob when I turned and laughed in her face.

In another second she was at me like a fury. I planted myself firmly in the hall and awaited her assault

"The game's not worth the candle," she suddenly exclaimed. "There is another way just as effective," and with this, to my surprise, she turned on her heel and tramped away

A second had not passed when a wild cry rang through the house; it came up from below like a gust of terror. I saw Teresa Hope run towards the staircase, and I was at her heels

We met at the landing, and as I tried to pass her she threw out her hand and forced me back.

"I'll attend to him," she said. "He hasn't had a spell like that for a month," and then she darted down the stair and I heard her in the library below.

What could I do? I waited a moment and then went back to my room.

Presently I heard the door of Teresa Hope's chamber close and I knew that she had cared for Rostan Gosnold

CHAPTER VIII

MADAME MANTELLI.

"What happened last night, Miss Reynolds?"

It was Reginald Gay who spoke, and I stood with him on the front porch of the House of Fear early the following morning

"Why do you ask?"

"First, because I looked out of my window, for I am a poor sleeper, and saw a man whom I took to be Brooks carrying something white towards the house. Then, I was awakened by a strange cry, and I thought I heard voices in the night. Were you up?"

I looked into the young man's eyes and saw that he was one who could be trusted

"The thing in white which you saw," said I, "was Annabelle."

"What?"

"She was being carried home by Brooks."

"Won't you please tell me all, Miss Reynolds? I think we ought to be friends, for I believe something impels."

"Are you good at enigmas, Mr. Gay?" said I, turning the subject to his annoyance.

"What do you mean?"

"Have you ever put together bits of torn paper till they made a common whole?"

"I used to delight doing that at school," he answered with a smile "What sort of a puzzle have you got that concerns any person in this house?"

We walked down to the pergola with the best of the morning's breath in our faces and he did not speak again.

I sat down and tumbled the bits of paper picked from among the rocks on the bench while his gaze grew wonderingly

"There's your task," said I, looking at him with a smile "I never was good at this thing."

I saw him take the torn pieces one by one and begin his work. He was methodical.

"I'll stand guard while you work," I said suddenly, at which he stared at me

"What! Does some one suspect you?"

"Yes."

I went outside, enjoining him to call me when he had accomplished his task and presently I heard his voice

When I returned he motioned me to a seat at his side. He had ranged the bits of paper as best he could, though there were many missing, and pointing to the strange conglomeration at his side he regarded me with a smile

"It's a queer affair," he said. "I never saw anything just like it. It reads in part like a prescription, then it jumps into a letter, but the important part seems missing."

"That's bad," said I, disconsolately. "I had hoped you would be able to solve the cryptogram."

"Wait!" cried he. "What a dunce I have been! I haven't thought of reversing the puzzle."

Then he set to work to turn the bits over and I watched him closely.

"Ah! here's an address," he said, his face brightening "Do you know the city quite well, Miss Reynolds?"

"I was born and raised in it," I replied.

"Then you must know where De Rosseau street is."

"I know."

"And knowing it, you may have heard of Madame Mantelli?"

I shook my head.

"It's a foreign name," he went on. Italian, I judge. From what I make out of the bits you gave me the writer of the letter to which the prescription-like words belong, wants Madame Mantelli to send something."

"Has the letter been mailed?"

"I think not. It seems to have been destroyed before it was sent; perhaps the circumstances under which you found it might tell you why."

I bent over the rearranged papers before me and studied the address for a moment.

"De Rosseau street is a strange one," I said at last. "It is the abode of foreign people, some fortune tellers and the like."

"And this Madame Mantelli may be one of these, think you?"

I nodded

"I might think out the puzzle if you cared to confide in me," he said venturesomely. "I used to think that I was cut out for a detective, for I have an uncle who is quite famous in that line."

Thereupon I told Reginald Gay everything.

He sat like one in a dream, as he listened to the strange revelations that fell from my tongue. Knowing that he wanted to know all, I told him of my coming to the House of Fear, how I had detected the fragrance of the nobi in the two glasses, how Annabelle had walked in her sleep, and I ended with my finding the bits of paper among the rocks where Teresa Hope had cast them

His face would darken for a moment and then brighten again.

"This Madame Mantelli must be seen," said he with determination. "She may be a link in the chain."

"And if she is——"

"The chain may be severed"

"You are right," said I, with rising hope "Doctor Dunlape will be back today"

"But I shall not be here. I am going down to the city."

"To find Madame Mantelli?"

"Yes"

He rose and shook himself like a young lion.

"It's a black plot, not only against Mr. Gosnold, but against Annabelle as well," cried he. "You must keep guard in this old house while I'm gone."

"I will do my best.'

'Let no harm come to my sweetheart," he went on. "We will work together and solve this dark puzzle. There is a link between Teresa Hope and Madame Mantelli. The woman in De Rosseau street may be the key that will unlock much."

"And you may be going into the lion's den," said I.

"It will be for the sake of the innocent if I do," he continued. "I will find this woman. You will let me take this puzzle, will you not?" and as I nodded he gathered up the bits of paper and placed them safely away.

We returned to the house. My breakfast was getting cold, but that bothered me little. I got through it with my head full of the adventures of the night, and then I went to my charge.

Rostan Gosnold greeted me with a wan smile of recognition.

As I took up his favorite book he laid his hand on my arm and drew me gently towards him

"Miss Reynolds, business before pleasure," said he. "Bring me the third volume of Gibbons' Rome."

I arose, and taking the book from its shelf laid it on the table at his hand

"Now please shut the door."

When I came back to him, he opened the book and took from it several folded sheets of paper

"This is my will," said he, raising his eyes to my face. "It is a strange will, you may think. There is another one in existence, and this one has never been signed. Would you call Flavia?"

I tapped the call-bell and the tall maid came in.

"I want you to witness this document," said Rostan Gosnold, addressing both of us at once. "I want this to stand as the will of Rostan Gosnold of Shadow Farm. The other one——"

He proceeded no further, for with a heavy gasp he fell back in his chair, and his face turned to a deathly hue

Flavia with a little cry sprang toward him, but I was too quick for her

"He is dead!" exclaimed the tall maid

"Not yet!" I cried, seeing light in the half-closed eyes. "His time has not come yet, Flavia"

Just then I heard steps on the staircase and the frou frou of skirts.

I seized the will and crushed it behind me as Teresa Hope's face appeared in the doorway.

"What!" she cried, taking in the situation at a glance, as her eyes glistened "Another swoon?"

She came forward, but I threw myself between her and the man in the chair

Her hand went into the depths of her

(Continued on page twenty-seven.)

BEECHAM'S PILLS

The Secret

Fair faces, like flowers, gladden the world.—Nothing so well insures a clean, spotless complexion as pure blood; nothing can impart such a blush rose-bloom as a brisk circulation; nothing can make the eyes so bright, the hair so glossy, the steps so elastic, as a nervous system that fails in none of its intricate and important functions.

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taken at proper times and in proper doses have done wonders in making women of today really as they ought to be. Under the influence of Beecham's Pills they exhibit a freshness, a bloom, a fullness of charm such as no other means can bring about; and so well is this "*open secret*" understood by some of the most charming that the first thing that they fly to at the earliest symptoms of pallor or pimples is the ever handy box of Beecham's Pills, for they have learned from glad experience that it is the quickest, surest and easiest way to

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Every woman who values good health should read the special instructions with every box of pills.

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Remember that this offer is for the genuine old Mellow Springs, the same straight, pure, aged-in-bond whiskey that physicians have always recommended for medicinal and home use. There's not a better whiskey to be had at any cost. Time was when you couldn't buy it for less than $1 25 the quart; but by selling direct to you and cutting out all intermediate profits and salesmen's expenses we have squeezed the final price down to the last minimum NOTE—These are FULL QUART bottles. Address orders to

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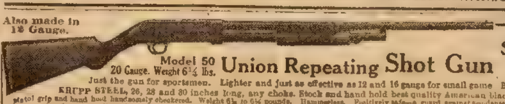

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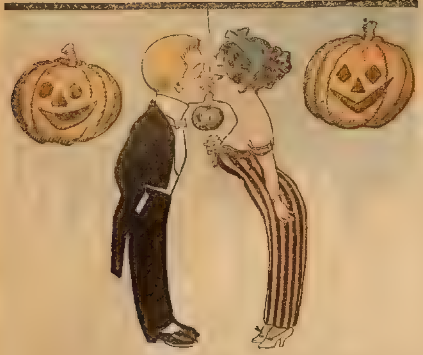


A new Hallowe'en game, in which a peach is used instead of an apple.

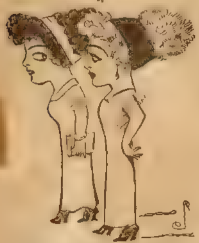
Good Reasons.

"Why does your daughter Sue go to the mountains"

"To get into high society"

"But why does your other daughter, Belle, go to the seashore?"

"To be in the swim"



Gracie—Artie says I'm the prettiest girl in the world

Maude—[illegible] Artie! It's a pity he has never traveled much

Preferred Papa.

Mother (at a reception)—Why didn't you accompany Mr. Nicefello out to supper?

Sweet Girl—I prefer to go with papa

Mother—Mr. Nicefello is devoted to you, and seemed much dejected by your refusal. I thought you—er—rather liked him.

Sweet Girl (blushing)—I do.

Mother—Then why didn't you go out to supper with him?

Sweet Girl—Well, if you must know, it's because I'm ravenously hungry.

Polly's Hand or Papa's Foot.

Molly—Did you let Jack kiss you before you were engaged"

Polly—Yes. That's how we happen to be engaged. Papa came along

Packing a Trunk.

The most wonderful thing about packing a trunk (jointly) is the number [illegible] things she discovers there won't be room for I have tried to talk this matter over with her [illegible] and unselfishly Already I have sacrificed considerable space in that trunk to her whims, but I am rapidly nearing the point of explosive exasperation

Now she has decided that there won't be any room in the trunk for my negligee shirts (two), fancy vest, yachting cap (vintage of 1904), sweater and rain-coat

My socks and suspenders are still in there, but she has two days more in which to discover them It's an even bet now that before we get away all I'll have left in the trunk will be the money it cost me

Scenery and Food.

"This prospectus speaks highly of the scenery"

"I think we'd better try the other hotel. They play up stronger on the meals."

Decided.

"Thought your wife was a brunette?"

"No, she is a decided blonde. I was with her when she decided

Objections.

"Well, how are you making it now"

"Still in the low-grounds."

"Why don't you climb higher?"

"High climbin' makes my head swim"

"Well, then, get a move on you."

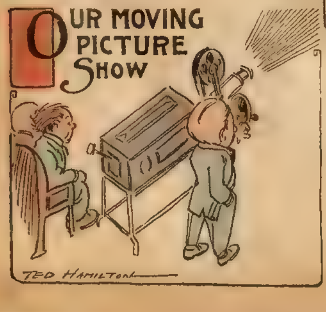
"Oh no! I never move until the rent is due!"

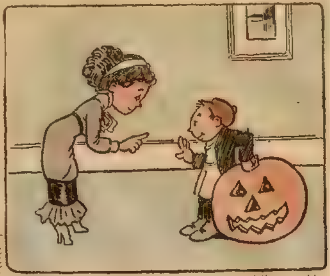
Genuine Article.

Joakley — Now, he's got what I really call "horse sense."

Coakley — How, for instance"

Joakley—He never bets on one





Sister—When I put my finger to my nose you put the pumpkin-face in the window and run away.

Should Think.

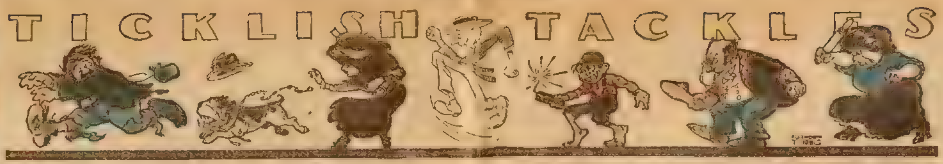
"A man should think" before he speaks," said the prudent youth.

Yes," replied Mr. Dustin Stax. "And he should think still [illegible] before he writes his name on the back of any sort of document"

Ingredient Lacking.

Mistress—Bridget, I told you twice to have muffins for breakfast. Have you no intellect?

Bridget—No, mum; there's none in the house



Women Are Such Fools.

Mrs. Hifile—I lost a dollar somehow out of my purse today

Mr Hifile—You did, eh? I'd like to know how you managed to do such an idiotic thing as that.

Mrs. Hifile—I can't tell exactly I was in Lacey's store and got into the crush at a bargain counter, and then my attention was attracted to another counter, and I worked my way there, and, I suppose, laid my purse down for an instant, possibly unclasped. All I know is that when I came to look a silver dollar was missing

Mr. Hifile—Huh! I see just how it was. You got so intensely excited over some fool frippery or other you forgot all about what you were doing: forgot where you were or who you were; didn't know whether you were on earth or Mars or Jupiter, alive or dead. You women never learn by experience—same thing over and over again. It isn't six months since you lost half a dollar the same way The washerwoman comes to-night, too, and I haven't a cent to pay her

Mrs. Hifile—You had forty dollars in your pocket this morning

Mr. Hifile—I dropped that at the races

The Girl's Handicap.

In her pretty new frock sister Mabel felt quite proud as she sat on the front step and watched some little boys playing on the sidewalk

After a time one little boy came up to talk to her and to admire, in his rough little way, her bright, shiny shoes and pink sash

"See my [illegible] waist," exclaimed the [illegible] my nice coral beads! Don't [illegible] you were a girl?"

"No, siree," replied the boy. "I wouldn't be any girl at all, because lookie how much more neck you haf to wash."

Always.

"With so many noon whistles blowing one after another for about five minutes, which one do your men take as a signal to stop work?" the contractor was asked

And without taking his mind off the important details of the job, he answered: "The first one"

Might Be Expected.

In China, when the subscriber rings up exchange, the operator may be expected to ask:

"What number does the honorable son of the moon and stars desire?"

"Hohi, Two-three."

Silence. Then the exchange resumes:

"Will the honorable person graciously forgive the inadequacy of this insignificant service and permit this humbled slave of the wire to inform him that the never-to-be-sufficiently-censured line is busy?"

Little Brother Won.

"How is your little brother, Johnny?"

"Sick abed. He hurt hisself."

"Oh, that's too bad. How did he do it?"

"We were playing who could lean the furthest out of the street window, and he won."

Scandal.

Mrs Simmonds glanced at the scare headline. "Bank Robbed! Police at Sea!" and laid down the sheet.

"Naow, look at that, Ez!" she ejaculated, repeating the headline aloud "Here's a big city bank broke into by burglars, and th' city police force all off fishin' somewhere! What a scandal!"

Room for Selection.

"What'll yoh have foh yoh breakfas', boss?"

"What have you"

"We's only got three breakfus' dishes

"What are they"

"Eggs, bacon an' eggs, an' bacon"

Their Acquaintance.

"When did you first become acquainted with your wife?"

"The first time I disagreed with her after we were married —Puck.

Didn't Like It Herself.

Child (during pause in sad song rendered with much expression)—Oh, mummy, the poor lady herself isn't liking it, either

Disproportionate

"We [illegible] expect [illegible] suffer pain in the same degree th[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] who believes in retribution

"Maybe so," answered the suffering friend "But I am convinced that my dentist has found a way of beating the game."

Call of the Links.

Two Scotchmen met and exchanged the small talk appropriate to the hour. As they were parting to go supperward Sandy said to Jock

"Jock, mon, I'll [illegible] a round on the links in the morn"

"The morn'?" Jock repeated

"[illegible] mon, the morn'," said Sandy. "I[illegible] ye a round on the links in the morn"

"Aye, weel," said Jock. "I'll go ye. But I had intended to get marriet in the morn'."

No Hurry for Air.

Sportsman (assisting jockey, who has been knocked out)—Stand back, please a little more air! And hurry up with that brandy!

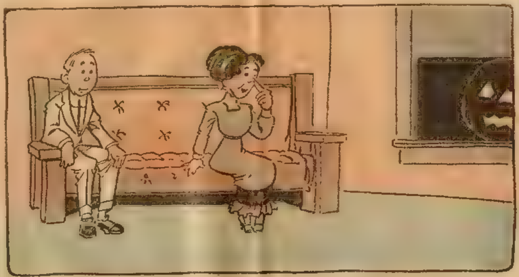
Faint Voice From Patient—Never mind 'bout the air.

His Trouble.

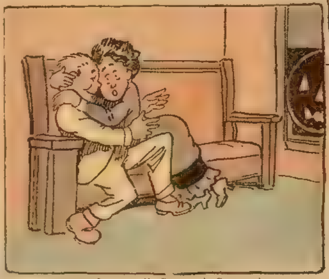
"Did you have any trouble with your automobile?"

Yes, indeed. I'm constantly kept busy making peace with people who think I ought to take them riding"

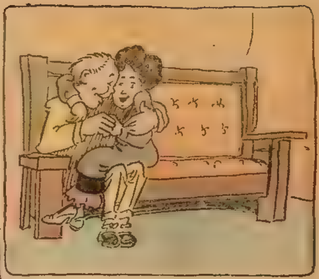
SISTER'S HALLOWE'EN GAME.



Sister (to Bashful Lover)—Yes, it was a nice day.



—O-o-o-o-o'! Save me' Save me!



Bashful Lover (20 minutes later)—And we can have a grand church wedding"

A Helpful Wife.

She's such a help to her clever husband. Everybody knows that he is a genius, but few are next to the fact that his little wife aids him in his every activity. We got a look-in at this state of affairs at the surprise party we gave him the other night

When the food had been discussed, he was called upon for a speech, of course. He arose from his seat beside his wife—he hemmed and hawed, and then he said

"Ladies and gentlemen—I am totally unprepared, of course, and—er—being as I said totally unprepared, you must—er—excuse me for being—er—unprepared I—er—ah—I was hardly prepared for this—er——" And then his wife interrupted

"Why, darling," she said, "you knew it perfectly this morning. The next sentence begins 'Knowing as I do——' Now you can go on from there."

What helps they are, these anxious wives of ours!

For Dear Teacher.

Mamma—So you want to give your dear teacher a present?

Tommy—Yes, ma. I'd like to give her some of that candy like I had the other day

Mamma—Why, Tommy, that was what made you so ill

Tommy—Yes, ma. I know it was.

Knew It Was His.

Mr De Avnoo—I saw our baby way around on a side street today. The baby should be kept in the park

Mrs. De Avnoo—That's where she is You must be mistaken

Mr. De Avnoo—No, I'm not! Don't you suppose I know that perambulator that I paid sixty-two dollars for?

■

A woman's idea of the good things of life looks like dry goods to a man.

In Court.

"What's the trouble?" inquired the judge

"This lady lawyer wants to make a motion," explained the clerk, "but her gown is too tight"

Prolonged Pursuit.

"I was pickin' huckleberries in the mountains below Boise one summer One mornin' I was on a steep hillside an' just 'bout had my pail full an' was thinkin' 'bout makin' f'r camp, when I looked up an' see two grizzlies comin tearin' down th' mountain. They was after me, that was plain, so I dropped my pail and lit out. Droppin' that pail was what saved my life, f'r th' bears, bein' fond of berries, stopped t' eat 'em, an' that give me a few yards th' start. Soon as they had finished th' berries they started after me [illegible]

"I was some runner in them days, an' th' way I covered groun' was a caution Th' bears kept gainin' on me though, 'till I come t' a big river an' run out on th' ice. Th' ice was thin an' held me up all right, but th' bears broke through an' both of 'em drowned. That's how I escaped."

There was silence for a few minutes, then some one asked: "Thought you said you were picking huckleberries. How is it possible for there to be ice in huckleberry time?"

"Huh! Who said anythin' 'bout there bein' ice in huckleberry time? Them durn bears run me till 'way after Christmas."

Remarkable Pens.

Weary Clerk—Have you any fountain pens that won't blot [illegible] they are neary empty?

Dealer—Why, sir. I have fountain pens that won't blot when they are entirely empty.

■

Ready Witted.

Tramp—Mister would you please give me a nickel for a meal?

Pedestrian—For a glass of beer, more likely

Tramp—Wotever you say, boss; you're payin' for it.

The Lying Habit.

"But sometimes it's all right to tell a white lie, isn't it?"

"Yes; but I notice that when a man gets that idea once, it isn't long till he becomes color blind"

Wasted Energy.

"I give you my word," said the milk toast philosopher "that when I discovered that the clock I had been careful to wind every night for ten years was an eight-day clock I was inclined to be petulant."

■

A Woman's "No."

Marks—I married my wife a month after she accepted me

Parks—That's nothing I married mine three days after she refused me

Sure Enough Biter.

Capt Peire Drouillard looked from the hotel at the rain falling drearily the other day. It reminded him, he said, of the time that a one-ring circus was tornadoed down in Georgia The main tent was blown down the menagerie tent was destroyed, all the cages were upset and the animals escaped The management huddled about a stove in a cross-roads store and peered pessimistically into a dismal future. The chances were they would never get the animals [illegible] The chances were better that [illegible] would be injured by the savage [illegible] ferocious beasts, which were exhibited at one price of admission By and by a negro approached. "Did you all lose a GI-raffe?" he asked. Type fails to [illegible] the peculiar darky tenor that Drouillard manages to get in

"We lost everything," said the manager shortly. "But we'll pay you if you get the giraffe back"

"It oughter be wort two dollah to git dat GI-raffe back," said the dark[y] "'Pear lak he a powahful bad-tempered GI-raffe. If Ah hadn' walloped [illegible] wif a club, dat GI-raffe would [illegible] bitten me"

"Giraffes don't bite, you fool" [illegible] the manager, head in hand "[illegible] kick. But you bring him back and [illegible]"

[illegible] insisted the colored man In a few minutes he reappeared, leading by a rope around his neck, Nero, the most ferocious man-eating lion in captivity. "W'oa," said he jerking at the rope Nero [illegible] obediently in the ra[illegible] [illegible] dollahs, w'ite man,' [illegible] youah GI-raffe [illegible]

Giving the Animals a Look.

At a county fair in a Western State, one of the attractions of which was an exhibition of curious animals, there appeared a countryman attended by a large assortment of boys and girls and a wife in a huge sunbonnet

The countryman took the "barker" for the exhibition into his confidence

"I'd like to go in and see them animals," said he, "but it would be kinder mean to go in without my family, and I can't afford to pay for my wife and fifteen children"

The city-reared "barker" stared at the man in astonishment

"Are all those your children?" he asked [illegible]

"[illegible] one of the fifteen," said the man

"Just wait a minute and I'll fix it up for you," said the obliging "barker" "[illegible] the animals and let 'em have a look at you and your family."

■

A Suspected Wife.

"What's the trouble, Mr Rockingham? You look worried"

"I am," replied the aged millionaire, who had married a young woman. "A deep, dark suspicion has entered my mind My wife has compelled me to quit wearing rubbers."

Prosperous.

"I hear you have left Slogger & Co.'s office"

Yes. I'm in business for myself now."

"What are you doing?"

"Looking for another job."

Styles in Disease.

"What seems to be your ailment" inquired the fashionable physician

"I hardly know", [illegible] the fashionable patient. "What is in vogue just now?"

Somewhat-Mixed.

A series of revival services was being held in a Western city, and placards giving notice of the services were posted in conspicuous places. One day the following notice was posted: "Hell; Its' Location and Absolute Certainty. Thomas Jones, barytone soloist, will sing, 'Tell Mother I'll be There'"

Circumstantial.

At first sight it seems brutally unjust that a man should be fined 5 shillings because a policeman overheard him saying: "Bless you, my love, I've found you at last

The convincing point was that he was saying it to a lamppost

His Old Victim.

"That man is persistently contentious."

"Yes," replied Senator Sorghum; "If he can't find anybody else to call down he keeps on arguing till he contradicts himself."

Taking No Chances.

The druggist approached the celestial gate. St. Peter opened the portal for him and bade him enter and join the heavenly choir

"Not so fast," admonished the compounder of pills. "Before I go in there I want to ask a few questions. Have you any city directories in Paradise

"No," replied St. Peter

"Any remedies for growing hair on [illegible] and doorknobs?

[illegible]

"Any soda fountains?"

"We don't know what they are."

"Do you sell stamps?

"We don't use them here"

"And last, but not least, have you any telephones?"

"We have not."

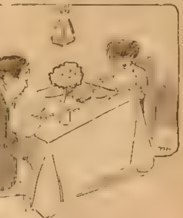
"Then I'll go in, for I guess this is Heaven all right, all right."

His Formality.

Stude—May I borrow your gray tie?

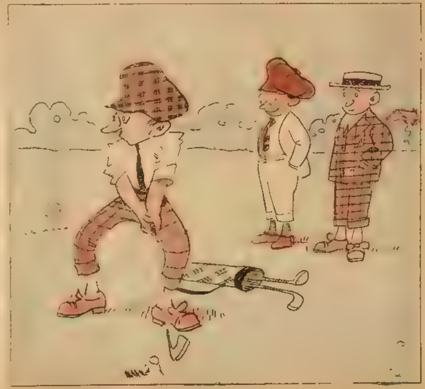
His Roommate—Sure. But why all this formality, of asking permission?

Stude—I can't find it



Mrs. Vardon Sir, down home they used to rave about my raspberry pies.

Mr. Vardon They are maddening



Hiler—Notice the peculiar golf stroke De Munn uses?

Hobert—That's a mannerism of his early life; he used to drive stakes for a circus

THE STOLEN WHITE HOUSE;

Or, THE PRESIDENT'S RIVAL

By WILLIAM H. MANNING

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CHAPTER XIII.

A HARSH DECISION.

COLGRAVE heard the statement with transient dismay, for the entrance of Adam Smith into the case put it on far different footing, but after that single thrill he was not sure that he would be sorry to meet the master conspirator. If no good came to him from it, he might, at least, be able to catch a ray of light that would help him later.

Glancing at Marcia, he saw relief and animation in her expression.

"Oh! I'm glad!" she exclaimed. "I know Mr. Smith slightly and he is a fine man, a talented gentleman who will very willingly restore my property if he has it."

The Texan failed to see what talent had to do with the belt-bag, but he passed that feature by.

"Friend of yours, eh?" he responded.

"A very good friend," she said, smiling.

She did not suspect that, in making this admission, she weakened her hold on her present champion greatly. At every step there was evidence that Marcia was in sympathy with, if not a confidante of the gang led by Jason Starwake and Smith.

He grew ambitious to get his hands on that bag and deprive her of it.

"Have you," the girl asked, turning abruptly to the man at the desk, "another carriage I can hire?"

Before he could answer, heavy steps thudded outside and a cab entered.

"There's one that's at your service," was the answer; and then he addressed the driver. "I don't suppose you have seen Morely, have you?"

"Met him a few minutes ago driving slowly along Pennsylvania avenue, and I understood him to say that he was going to Georgetown with his fare."

Marcia waved her hand excitedly.

"Catch that other carriage and it will mean ten dollars to you!" she declared. "Come, sir!"

The last words were to Colgrave, and though he found the command a trifle over-brusque he did not hesitate to obey, so they entered and were quickly on their way. The driver plied his whip and was off to win the promised ten.

"It may be all right," said Marcia, sighing with mixed emotions. "Anyhow, I can rely upon Mr. Smith."

"Is he," the Texan asked, "a resident of Washington?"

"He is a citizen of the world. He has been in many countries, American and European, and is very familiar with Japan and China—oh, a man of vast knowledge and many interests! As soon as he has it perfected he will give the world a new smokeless gunpowder that will revolutionize all that has gone before. He admits that."

Colgrave smiled secretly.

"Where is his plant for manufacturing?" he inquired.

"It is—really, I don't think I ever heard him say. That is not material; it is the man who counts. Bless me, we are going as fast as the law will permit; I have hope of overtaking Mr. Smith."

"I am almost as much interested as you are."

"Thank you so much! You have proved a loyal aid. That reminds me, I am sure I spoke sharply as we were leaving the office back there. If you can forgive that, and my other ill-tempered speeches of the night, I shall be grateful. The truth is, my nerves are on the jump, for you see I—I—am——"

"Yes?" he questioned encouragingly.

"Nervous!"

Colgrave smiled again, but not with satisfaction. She always managed to dodge when unwilling to meet a complication, and he was not accumulating information perceptibly.

"That is not my usual condition," she added, "but I have been under anxiety so long, tonight, that I think my nerves have become disgusted. They twang! It exasperates me, but they do."

Meanwhile their driver had certainly been earning his pay. Stretching the speed limit as far as was safe for a sane citizen, he was taking them along at a lively clip. Going, he kept his attention fixed ahead, and as few carriages were abroad he had an encouraging view. Finally he turned his head and chuckled audibly.

"We've got them!" he announced.

"Sure?" asked Colgrave, himself scanning their foreground. "I see a carriage, but it's a long distance from us. Can you say with certainty that——"

"I surely can. Morely has a peculiar habit when sitting on his box, and I'd know him from here to China. That's Morely. Rather quick work we've done, eh? That's because we go three rods to their one. They are loafing along."

"They turn from the avenue."

"They do, and so we will when we reach that point. Go it, my Arabian!"

For the first time they heard the swish of the whip, and the horse answered the call readily.

"We shall catch them!" breathed Marcia. "Isn't it delightful?"

Colgrave agreed that it was, but he made a mental reservation. The impression was strong with him that the mysterious belt-bag had to do with the criminal affairs of the men who wanted to steal the White House, and he was not so sure how Adam Smith would stand when they appeared. If Marcia had been acting in his interests, all would be well, but unless he fully approved of her undertaking it was not certain but what trouble would follow.

Presently the foremost vehicle was again under survey, but it was going faster, and a long chase began, though they steadily drew nearer. At last Marcia became additionally thoughtful.

"Do you know," she asked, "that we are nearing the river at the point where the old schooner lies?"

"I thought as much."

"I don't like it, for that place gives me the creeps. I am tempted to direct my driver to call to Mr. Smith, but he might not hear, and——"

"The other carriage has stopped and he is getting out."

"Yes, and he is met there by two or three other men. Why, what is such an aristocratic gentleman as Mr. Smith doing in this section, especially at night?"

Colgrave did not reply, and they swept down upon the other party just as Morely was turning his horse. Smith was easily distinguishable from the others, even in the dull light, and when Colgrave saw him striding toward them with long steps he scented something in the way of a rebuff. Smith held up his hand imperiously.

"Stop where you are!" he commanded to Marcia's driver. "The law has something to say about your prowling around here at this hour. No houses are near, and your motive—well, you know what it is, but I represent the law. Go back!"

Marcia stepped lightly to the ground and advanced upon the speaker. With Mr. Smith and Colgrave present she did not seem to be in any danger, and her manner was composed.

"Don't you recognize me, Mr. Smith?" she asked.

"I have not that honor."

"I am Miss Starwake."

"Indeed!" he returned, looking at her sharply. "I once briefly met a Miss Starwake, but you can hardly be she. It is not like her to be roaming about the city at such an hour. If you think to traffic in her name you will fail. It is plain that you are——"

He stopped speaking and his regard gained fresh keenness. Doubtless he saw a resemblance, but, himself full of devious schemes, was uncertain whether to believe or not. Wavering, his whole attitude expressed his hostility and severe judgment.

"Miss Starwake?" he repeated. "Hardly!—you are some adventuress. Wait! if you are she, prove it. Did you come from your father?"

Marcia's cheeks were burning, but she answered quickly.

"I come from nobody. I had yonder carriage before you engaged it, and left something in it. Have you found anything?"

"Nothing, and I think—but we will see this matter through. The driver will look for you."

But she had herself moved forward and was hastily searching. When she stepped back her hands were empty. Smith was watching her with a smile of gentlemanly disbelief, but Morely's sympathies were evidently with her.

"Maybe," he suggested, "the other young lady found something there."

"The other lady?" Marcia echoed. "What lady?"

"Why, you know how we shook off your pursuer. Well, after you ran away they still came bowling after me, and as I saw no reason for driving all night, I stopped after I had gone a dozen blocks and asked them what they wanted. They said nothing, but I told them you were gone. They wouldn't believe me, and then a lady jumped out of the other cab and ran to the door of mine. She leaned forward, I remember, but when she drew her head back she admitted that nobody was inside. Naturally, she found no human being, but what else she found I can't say. If you lost anything she had a fine chance to scoop it in."

The story fell with force, but Colgrave heard with exultation where Marcia was dismayed. He recalled that the other lady had been Mary Olland, and if the driver told the truth the mysterious belt-bag might at that moment be in Mary's possession.

Miss Starwake was looking at the Texan with quivering lips.

"I didn't know any woman was there," she said plaintively, "but whoever she was she has beaten us. After all we have done to be baffled. It is hard!"

Smith had been surveying Marcia and her escort with keen intentness, and he now spoke brusquely.

"Who," he asked, "is this gentleman?"

"His name is—well, really, I don't know his name."

"So you ride by night with an utter stranger? This is a remarkable affair, and the mystery of it is puzzling. Neither do I know the gentleman, but I shall be glad to form his acquaintance. It happens that I am in haste, just now, but I can give you time later. I will ask you to remain here for a hour or so, while your escort is even more a desirable companion. He will stay until morning."

The conspirator's manner was calm, but his choice of words had been unfortunate. Once more he had given Marcia grounds for offense, while the conclusion was fuel for the flames.

"Do you mean," she cried, "that you will detain me against my will?"

"It is equally against my will, but pray look at the circumstances. You followed me here. Why? Even in the small concerns of life I dislike a spy ——"

"I have told you that I came to find something I had left in the cab."

"With a total stranger for an escort? Is that like the real Miss Starwake? Much as I dislike to, I am compelled to think there is something not yet explained, while your course in dogging me——"

"Sir, do you doubt my word?" she passionately demanded.

Colgrave had not been seriously troubled by the threat that he was to be detained, for there was nothing in Smith's manner to show that he looked upon him with actual hostility, and there was possibility that such a stay would give him light on certain matters, but he forgot his own concerns as the conspirator drove his arguments home.

"Permit me," he interrupted curtly, "to have a word here. The lady will explain to you just what she sees fit, be it much or little, and you will then accept her word, and do it with the way of a gentleman. After that she will depart."

"Meaning——"

"That you shall no longer insult her," explained Colgrave firmly.

"You really interest me," retorted Smith, smiling sarcastically, "but I hardly think your wishes will weigh much. Gentlemen," and he turned to his companions, "pray come forward and take this nameless man into custody. He stays with us tonight."

CHAPTER XIV.

AT GREAT RISK.

The Texan remained wholly calm, and he faced the group with firmness not to be overlooked.

We all make mistakes," he observed, his voice even and incisive, "and you have made yours now. Neither the lady nor myself will be detained here. Stop where you are! Take notice!"

With this he drew his revolver and extended it with dexterity learned in the wild places of the Southwest. It was an argument not common in the City of Washington, but revolvers are cosmopolitan parents of impressions, and the advancing men stopped.

"Think again, Mr. Smith!" Colgrave added. "Item one, that we are not going to be detained here. Item two, that if you have due regard for decency and your own interests you will not give all your attention to guessing whether the lady is what she claims, but put her to the test. If you have met her, and if, further, you know her father, there should be no difficulty in getting proof."

Marcia was in a lamentable mental condition, but her most consuming desire at that moment was to escape the indignity the conspirator would put upon her and leave the wretched place. Colgrave's suggestion gave her a new idea.

"Let me speak with you aside, Mr. Smith," she requested curtly.

He hesitated and looked as closely at her and then at Colgrave's ready revolver as the dim light would permit. Then he made a swift gesture.

"As you will," he replied. "If this can be proved to my satisfaction, we may, perhaps, be able to arrange matters."

Colgrave suspected that Smith did not feel that he had managed the case with his usual wisdom, though some dilemmas are difficult to handle, and that he was glad of a chance to retreat from his position. With his customary urbanity beginning to be in evidence he went aside with Marcia and they spoke steadily. A few words drifted to the Texan's hearing, and he was sure that she had no difficulty in establishing her identity, but

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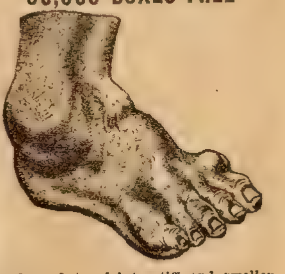

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Colgrave, himself, proved to be the stumbling block.

What was to be done with him?

It was easy to trace Marcia's arguments and Smith's opposition in various ways, but presently the conspirator returned.

"If," he said, "you can satisfactorily account for yourself I will allow you to go away freely. Who are you?"

The younger man had seen that he must not be too strongly wedded to veracity if he would keep out of trouble, and he was ready.

"My name is Clarke, and I'm interested in real estate in this city."

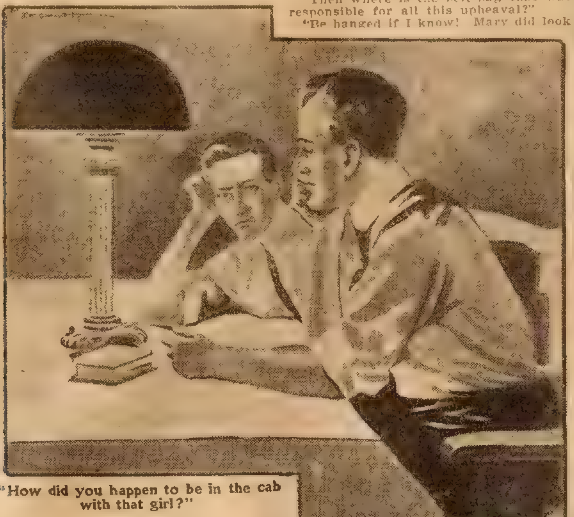
It was a beginning, and when Smith added other questions he received equally prompt replies. Five minutes later Smith had ended his catechism and consulted his friends, after which he waved his hand irritably.

"I understand you wish to return as you came, and I don't object. Maybe I was too hasty in challenging you, but I represent the law, and persons driving at such an hour in a section so remote and uninhabited as this naturally arouse suspicion. My zeal led me to act as I did. Now, trusting that harmony is restored, I will bid you goodnight and give you my best wishes."

Colgrave expressed his thanks, though certain that Smith had nothing to do with the law except to break it when he saw fit. Marcia was making another search of the cab, but whatever she aspired to find was still missing, and she sighed and gave up. She said goodby to Mr. Smith, and then, with Colgrave, entered her own vehicle and they were driven away. The Texan tried to read her face in the baffling light and waited for her to speak.

"Adam Smith is a brute!" she suddenly exclaimed.

"He certainly did not awaken my own admiration," her escort agreed.



"How did you happen to be in the cab with that girl?"

"He is my father's friend, and I spoke with him once—only once, which was why he did not know me readily tonight. Still, I took to him greatly on that former occasion, and father's words of praise seemed to settle his standing. Now, I hate him!"

"He appeared to think he owned all of Washington."

"Really, I can't understand why he acted as he did. So dignified a business man should not care a fig who went abroad, nor why they went. I wonder why he cared so much?"

"Can you give no guess?"

"None at all, and his harsh words—but let me forget that. Oh, I could shed tears by buckets! I am miserable. I've been running about the city wildly strangely, and maybe his censure was not wholly misplaced. The worst if it is the thing I dropped in the carriage is lost."

"You can advertise for it."

"Indeed I shall not advertise!" she exclaimed quickly.

"Such appeals to the public sometimes go far."

"Too far, altogether too far! I wish that driver would hurry his horse. I want to get home, and do it quickly. I feel like flying, but my wings are crippled."

She wound up with a sob, and Colgrave was perplexed as to his own course. Forgetting his calmer opinion of her, he was grieved by her distress and longed to comfort her, but how could he do so when the whole affair was wrapped in deep mystery?

The return toward the Starwake mansion was soon made, but Colgrave remembered the former occasion, and a few blocks short of their destination, made a movement toward the cab door.

"I will leave here," he said quietly.

"Leave? Why?" she asked, as if in wonder.

"So as not to be seen near your home."

"Mr. Clarke," and her voice was tremulous, "I am deeply chagrined that I tried to dismiss you before as I did—though, pray believe me, there was good reason for secrecy—and it shall not be so again. You have been a kind and loyal helper tonight, and I am very grateful. Please forget a lot of unpleasant happenings and ride as far as the door. I wish it so."

He was not certain that his own interests looked that way, but he made no remonstrance. He alighted before the gate, and then assisted her out, but said good night at that point. He went with her thanks again in his ears, but in uncertain mood. What he knew of Marcia was so sweepingly contradictory that he was all at sea. To believe in her or not to believe was the question, and his judgment was baffled.

When he arrived at his quarters he found Brickley still up and smoking by the wholesale. Longing for a confidant, and seeing no reason for acting to the contrary, he gave his ally the remarkable story of his latest adventures. He had an attentive listener, so attentive, in fact, that Brickley forgot to smoke, and leaned forward as if to drink in every syllable and make sure of it.

"Now, then," said Colgrave in conclusion, "what do you see in this muddled-up case?"

"I see only one thing," Brickley answered, "but I see that mighty clearly."

"What is that one thing?"

"That women and mystery are identical."

"Perhaps I don't comprehend all that you have in mind."

"I don't think you do. Let me tell you, then, that I am the man who was in cab number two with Mary Olland!"

"What?" exclaimed Colgrave, dumfounded.

"Fact! You see—"

"Then where is the belt-bag that was responsible for all this upheaval?"

"Be hanged if I know! Mary did look in that cab, as the driver said, but if she found any treasure I was not taken into her confidence. Before you came I could have sworn she found nothing, but with the breath of your tangled tale stinging in my nostrils I'm ready to think it possible that Mary found much and said nothing to me. What did I say before? Women and mystery, one and inseparable!"

"How did you happen to be in the cab with that girl?"

"Because she asked it of me. I've been waiting for you, thinking I had a long story of mystery to pour into your ears, but after your own account I see that my experiences only fit in like wedges, so I will be brief."

"But," questioned the Texan, still rather dazed, "how did you come into Mary's company at all?"

"I was in this room when word was brought that a lady wished to see me. I went down and found Mary there. She had a cab, and she directed me to enter. I did so, and we went to a street corner a little beyond her old home. There we waited. Presently another cab appeared and we dogged it. Wherever it went, we went, and we were a good bit on the bloodhound pattern. I saw you enter, but it was so far off that I did not recognize you, and I did not know it was Miss Starwake we were dogging until you just told me so."

"Pity!"

"So it is. Well, after you slipped us so neatly, Mary looked in the other cab, but if she found anything she did not say so."

"But what explanation did she make of her strange course?"

Brickley smiled dismally.

"You have seen the way of one woman, and I saw the way of another, but the

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way was the same in both cases. Mystery, sir, mystery! Yes, but nothing more. Mary said she had a clew, and she carried me along like a whirlwind, but she gave me no light. Not one word of explanation, though she did deign to state that her tidings were for your ears. Still, I notice that she did not come here, afterwards, to meet you."

"What did she say at parting?"

"Only that it was late she would get back to Starwake's and she went. Fact is, Mr. Colgrave, I am an atom torn up the back because of the fashion in which I was made a dummy in a mystery otherwise delightful."

The Texan was not satisfied with the scanty information, and he asked many more questions, but finally found that he had learned all that his ally could tell.

"These two remarkable young women," he then said irritably, "have taken the bit in their mouths and gone past control. Mary's outbreak worries me. I'm willing to affirm that she acted with the best of intentions, and maybe she has done no damage, but as this is more my affair than hers, I would like a voice in the proceedings."

"We have simply been footballs!" replied Brickley, smiling ruefully. "The senior partners are cast out of the firm and the juniors rule—still, Mary is a mighty pleasant little miss."

"Hang the pleasant part!"

Colgrave flung out the words angrily Under ordinary circumstances he would not have cared if Mary showed her inclination for leadership, but his interests were too many and too vast to have them possibly upset by a rash move by one not in his confidence.

"I must see her in the morning," he finally announced. "If she can tell anything, she must. Fact is, I am wondering what Smith was prowling around so near the old schooner for, and the Cormorant calls me that way. I reckon I'm due there tomorrow night, and first I want speech with Mary. I'll see her in the morning."

Morning came, but he did not see the girl. He walked past the Starwake house without gaining sight of her, and Brickley, whom he stationed near as a less-known spy, watched from the cover of the shrubbery with as little success

Mrs. Olland was seriously worried, although she was not told of the night's occurrences, and she asked permission to go boldly to Starwake's, but Colgrave, wavering between fear that harm had befallen the girl and a vague hope that she was in some manner doing herself credit, forbade the step.

Brickley manifested lively interest, and finally hit upon the idea that Mary had been detected, captured and imprisoned in the Cormorant, and he advocated his theory so actively that even Colgrave was impressed. That, however, did not change his plans. He intended to visit the wreck that night, and if he was successful he would settle the possibility, as well as various other mysteries.

At what he regarded as the proper hour he prepared for the start. Brickley long contended for leave to bear him company, but his leader demurred. Finally, as the only concession, he agreed that he might go as far as the river bank, and there hide in the bushes and hold watch over the schooner at a distance.

They walked to the point where Colgrave had borne his companion after the escape from drowning, and there separated.

"If you need help, call loudly," urged Brickley.

"I don't think I shall need to call," the Texan calmly returned.

"I've told you before that you are bound to have the fight of your life, and I believe it still. If the Smith gang feel harassed enough to remove Peter Olland for negligence, they surely have a keen-eyed watchman now. He may shoot you before you touch the schooner."

"I don't think so."

"Then they will contrive to nab you once you get aboard——"

Brickley was sincerely worried, but Colgrave cut him short. Stepping into the river he was quickly in deeper water and swimming toward the Cormorant.

"He goes like a duck," muttered the man left behind, "but what good will that do him? A mighty reckless piece of work, and his life isn't worth a candle. Oho! I think I see the watchman moving on deck, and Colgrave is swimming right into his view. It's a big risk!"

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE SCHOONER'S HEART.

Colgrave neared the schooner with strokes that were light and noiseless in a marked degree. Thoroughly at home in the water, he used all of his skill and was almost like a floating cork. Swimming, he kept his gaze vigilently upon the Cormorant, anxious to note the slighest sign of life in that quarter.

A sign was soon seen, and somebody moved along the nearer side of the deck, walking close to the bulwark. That it was the watchman he did not doubt, and for a time he allowed himself to drift, but when the figure circled around toward the bows he resumed his own way. He had not forgotten the opening through which he had escaped on the former occasion, and he propelled himself under the ship's counter and had the shore-like window above him, but it was closed.

After a little search he found the broken plank that had before served him and drew himself up. Then his hand passed cautiously over the obstacle, investigating and pushing, but with disappointing results.

The window was fastened.

It was no surprise, for it was not likely that any opening would be left otherwise, after what had happened before, and he prepared for the venture he had all along expected

The problem was to gain the deck and go below unheard by the man on duty.

Again swimming he made his way to the stern, and slowly and carefully lifted himself until his eyes were above the rail. The night was moonless and cloudy and the deck in dusky shadow, a region of uncertainty and doubt. The figure of the watchman was faintly discernible as he leaned against the port bulwark, but he and the lopsided mast were the only things that rose noticeably above the general level. It was impossible, in the darkness, to say what else was there.

Colgrave swung a leg over the rail and waited. Situated there he noticed more plainly than ever before that the schooner had a lift and fall unusual to a craft hopelessly aground on an obstruction, and had he been a sailor he might have argued something from the fact.

Presently he drew himself wholly over and was on the deck, but the next step was not so easy. How was he to pass down the companionway unseen?

The rattle on deck was seriously against him, for collision with box or loose board would, at the least, send forth a dull sound, and this would be enough to spur the lookout on to investigation. Nevertheless, as he must advance among the litter, he started.

Picking his way with caution, he had nearly reached the waist when the watchman again turned and came walking along the starboard side. His manner was easy and Colgrave did not fear that he was discovered, but the trouble was to avoid him. Then the mast became a central point around which the Texan slid as fast as the lookout made his round. The unusual alertness was doubtless the result of positive orders, and the man was not neglectful, but Colgrave was keenly attentive, himself, and paused as near the companion as as he dared.

Once more the watchman went toward the bows, and as he did so the intruder slipped quietly toward the stairs. He was soon treading downward, and the dreaded alarm had not come.

In going he cut himself off from retreat, unless luck was making him a prime favorite that night, but his nerves remained unruffled. He could meet with nothing worse than he had expected from the first, and past training was a strong helper then.

Reaching the passage where Brickley had once come to grief, he heard nothing and saw only blackness. The conspirators were not in council that night, and it was an item of great good fortune Believing that the only immediate danger was that somebody occupied a stateroom, he had his work marked out, but sharp risk went with it. As he thought it more hazardous to flounder around in the dark than to walk soft-footed with a light, he now lit the wax candle he had brought for that purpose.

The cabin lay before him. On his former visit he had given scant attention to the place, but nothing escaped him now

The table was in place and the few chairs scattered about, but there was no other furniture. The lockers presented no problems, especially as the covers were, with one exception, wrenched away, and he passed that part of the schooner by as commonplace.

A few minutes later he had also seen that the staterooms were unfurnished, dilapidated and vacant, the time-smitten charts and rusty nautical instruments that were in one room making up the sum total of movable fittings.

When this had been discovered he stood still meditating. In a way he was disappointed, though realizing that conspirators were not likely to leave betraying evidence so situated that it would shout to an intruder and ask his attention to the mystery.

But was there nothing more?

He had seen meager experience as a sailor, but knew that even a schooner of the Cormorant's tonnage must have a hold, and he looked for it, though doubtful that the cabin would supply a way. Presently, however, he detected a peculiar square in the flooring, found an iron ring there and lifted. A black depth was revealed beyond. Then he held his light down, gazed his best, found a rude ladder and took the venture.

In three minutes he was below, with the opening closed.

What he saw reminded him of a nearly empty barn. The long reach that, when the Cormorant was footing the sea, had been packed with cargo was now empty save for a few cases, most of which were broken and tumbled to pieces. It was not an inviting place, nor one of promise, but he was there for business, and he disregarded the ugly, threatening blackness and scurrying, squealing rats and went about his investigation.

From the beginning he had assured himself that the schooner had secrets other than the facts that conspirators met there, but disappointment met him and conditions declared otherwise. His keenest scrutiny failed to find honest goods, dishonest explosives, or anything else worth surveying. The original timbers and the limited raffle made the sum total.

He was studying these facts with keen annoyance when he thought he heard steps in the cabin. Quick to scent danger he blew out his candle and waited, nor was he long in uncertainty. A belt of light shone into the hold and a hand and a lamp appeared at the scuttle.

Colgrave calmly made sure that his revolver and knife were ready for use and waited further. He wondered who was above that hand. Then a leg appeared, and its attached foot was placed upon the upper step.

Somebody else was about to descend.

The Texan had already given close attention to a nook where the timbers centered and were fronted by an empty case, and he managed to gain that hiding-place without betraying noise. This was barely accomplished when footsteps ceased near the ladder, but at that moment the actual interest began. Holding his lamp above his head, a man stood with water dripping from his saturated clothes, peering into the blackness intently, but like one in an unfamiliar quarter. This was something, but as Colgrave recognized him there was something vastly more impressive.

The man was Cartley, assistant private secretary to the President.

Quick thinking satisfied the Texan that the occasion was remarkable in various ways. Cartley was an ally of Smith, and possibly it was to be expected that he would be a frequenter of the schooner, but the visible facts negatived the idea. His wet condition was good evidence that he had swum to the Cormorant, his stealthy manner was equally strong proof that he had crept furtively to the lower part of the craft, while his whole conduct was that of one in strange surroundings.

What did it mean?

The secretary continued his survey for several minutes, and with plain uneasiness, and then muttered an audible curse upon the running rats. This done he started toward the stern, his movements slow, his eyes boring gimlets, but the former uncertainty and uneasiness holding fast.

"Perdition take the whole business!" growled the prowler. "There are a thousand hiding places!"

Colgrave wondered for what? If something was hidden what was it, and why was Cartley so troubled?

The secretary was there to search, and he did it. Using his light as best he could he prowled about, peering here and there, stretching himself to look high or stooping to look low, and always he muttered maledictions upon the luck. Disappointed, at first, he adopted a system and subjected both sides of the dismal vault to careful scrutiny, but though his attention was sharp, and though he often sounded the solid woodwork in a way that would have amused a sailor, he met with no success.

Colgrave was but little less interested than his unsuspicious companion, and his zeal did not stop where the other's did. It was an almost constant difficulty to escape discovery himself, and though the slow movements of the secretary gave him ample time to shift his hiding place, there was constant danger that, as he changed about in the dark, he would either fall or otherwise betray his presence.

Finally Cartley paused and expressed his disappointment in words that sizzled with the escape of his strong feelings. When he had vented his anger a trifle he calmed down, and staring around, gave breath to connected words.

"I'm sure it's here somewhere," he muttered, "and I've a good mind to set fire to the infernal old hulk to destroy it. If they've got it, if they try to make me a mere tool to do their bidding ——"

He paused again, made a vicious gesture, and slowly added:

"What's the use? Smith has me in his power, anyhow, and a few more strands to the rope that hangs me won't hurt much. I'll stick to Smith, and then if he goes back on me, by Jupiter, I'll kill him!"

The words came forth spitefully, and his sincerity could not be doubted, but Colgrave found comfort in his complaint. It was no more than a slight irritation between knaves, and Cartley had himself announced his intention of remaining faithful. He seemed in a mood to ramble further, but checked himself with an impatient movement.

"I'm a fool!" he commented. "I'm glad tomorrow night settles it."

He wheeled abruptly toward the steps, so abruptly, in fact, that the chimney reeled on his lamp and fell crashing to the floor. With the flame leaping up he gave heed to the fact that the festoons of cobwebs made dangerous points above, and no longer ambitious to set fire to the schooner, he blew the light out. Darkness was not a perilous thing in itself, but as he gained a longing to get free from the hold before other troubles arose he made a rash move. Starting for the steps imprudently, he took the wrong direction, brought up against an obstructing box, and tumbled completely over it.

It was ill luck for both prowlers that Colgrave was at that moment hiding at that point, and as he had no time to shift the inevitable occurred. They came together with a thump that sent both to the floor.

After all his spying in what he supposed was loneliness, Cartley discovered that he had a man to deal with, and the fact jarred upon his nerves. Exactly what he thought or what he expected could not be told, but he grappled with Colgrave and held tight.

The Texan was exasperated and worried, and though hoping that sounds so far below the deck would not reach the watchman's ears, he grew eager to take all possible means of preventing it, and he was not slow to retaliate.

Locked in each other's arms they rolled about like fighting animals.

Cartley was fairly muscular for a city man, but it was soon proved that he was no match for his powerful antagonist, and he was turned upon his back and held there. Finding struggles useless he lay quiet.

"Well," he snapped, "you seem to have trapped me."

"Just so!" replied Colgrave laconically, willing to humor an evident error of judgment.

"Why the blazes didn't I hear you before?"

"I took pains to see that you didn't."

"Well, what now?"

"What are you doing here?"

"Have you been watching me?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll let you guess at the rest Are you Smith?"

Colgrave gave heed to the uncertainty that plainly lay back of the question and proceeded accordingly.

"I can hardly claim to be Mr. Smith," he answered quietly, "but I have something to say, all the same. Mr. Cartley, I am sincerely interested to know what you are doing in this place. One of your exalted station should find better work to do than to prowl around in the hold of an abandoned hulk."

"Why so, when Adam Smith, whom we call the President's rival, does not disdain to visit it's cabin? The superannuated Cormorant is a page in contemporaneous history, so I'm hardly too exalted to be here."

Colgrave admired a man of courage, and the way in which his prisoner talked under adverse circumstances appealed to him somewhat. He drew him to a sitting position, though keeping his hold tenaciously.

"I will waive that point," he pursued, "but why, I ask, are you here? Why have you searched this old hole in the Cormorant's heart, as if lured by diamonds?"

"Why have you been prowling here?" retorted Cartley readily. "One and one make two, and it seems we both have a purpose that doesn't float so nimbly as a flag in a breeze. If you will confess first it is possible that I——"

He stopped short and both men fixed their gaze on the same point. A circle of light had appeared at the top of the hold, and by the circle was a human head. A spy was there, peering down, and they were trapped.

(To be continued next week.)

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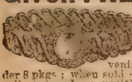

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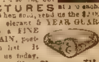

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The Mysterious Detective

(Continued from page six.)

dressing the old man, who stood in the street, "what did you see?"

"Boss," said Uncle Nuzzer, still afraid, "I suggest that it ain't safe for me to say no more. You ain't goin' to be here forever. And I don't want to antagonize Mr. Weevely——"

"Antagonize me, you whelp!" roared Weevely. "What have you done already? Do you know what 'antagonize' means?"

"Yes, sah, I suggest, I does, and dat why I ain't say no more 'bout dem diamonds."

Keeneyes said threateningly, "You'll tell me about them, all the same!"

"No, sah," cried the negro, shaking his head violently, "I don't tell nobody."

Keeneyes smiled blandly. He said, "You say that for Mr. Weevely to hear us. Yes, yes. Come, then Uncle Nuzzer, let us retire to some barn, or other, where we will be safe."

"Uncle Nuzzer," roared Weevely, "if you tell a word of what you saw, I'll blow your brains out!"

"Yes, sah; no sah. I ain't goin' to tell nothing, sah."

"Why, Uncle Nuzzer," said Keeneyes, in pretended reproach, "haven't you already told me that you saw this gentleman hiding his stolen jewels yonder in the back lot? Didn't you just now lead me to the very spot? How can you be so artful, Uncle Nuzzer? What a simple character you appear, yet how deep, how deep!"

Weevely turned ghastly pale. "Where were you that night?" he called through the doorway, to the shrinking negro.

"He must have been in town," remarked Keeneyes dryly, "to see you putting away the gems."

In secret, the detective was highly elated over his successful guessing. The diamonds had actually been buried in the back lot!

Weevely cursed hoarsely. "Come, Mr. ZeZllers," he said, "what do you propose to do?"

"I want to make terms with you," said Keeneyes. "Tell me all about the theft, and I will protect you, as far as I am able; and I am generally able to do all I want to do. But if you persist in denying the facts, I will make it just as hard for you as I possibly can. And I can always crush a man when I set myself to the task."

He turned his piercing gray eyes upon the real-estate agent.

"I'll tell you everything," gasped Weevely, cowed at last.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN A HURRY AGAIN.

"Uncle Nuzzer," Keeneyes said to the negro, "you stay out here in the street till I call you. Understand?"

"Yes, sah," said the old man, dolefully. He was mortally afraid of Weevely.

"You understand, Uncle Nuzzer," Keeneyes persisted, "that Mr. Weevely is going to tell me all about how he stole the diamonds."

"Yes, sah."

"Very good. Now, I want you to wait outside, and if Mr. Weevely tells me anything that sounds 'fishy' to me—to quote from him—I will call you in to confirm or disprove his story."

"Yes, sah."

"Since you saw him hide the diamonds, Uncle Nuzzer, you will know whether his story is true or false."

Uncle Nuzzer did not answer. He caught Weevely's ferocious gaze fastened upon him.

Keeneyes went inside, and closed the door behind him.

"Now, Mr. Weevely," he said, pleasantly, "are you ready to confess?" Mr. Weevely, can you remain upon your

"I am forced to confess," Weevely growled.

"Then do it," said Keeneyes, briefly

"If I took the diamonds," said Weevely, "I meant to return them."

"Oh, of course."

"What did I want with diamonds?" snarled the real-estate agent. "Do I wear diamonds?"

"Just so. Nor sell 'em, either, I suppose?"

"Of course not. If I'd tried to sell those diamonds, wouldn't I have been caught? Those diamonds are too well known."

"What did you take them for, Mr. Weevely?"

Weevely hesitated, swallowed hard, then said.

"I will tell you why."

"Do so," returned the detective; "but wait one moment."

He consulted his watch.

Then he smiled pleasantly, and said: "Unfortunately, Mr. Weevely, I have spent so much time, here, that I am obliged to terminate this interview."

Weevely blinked, without comprehending.

"Eh?" stammered Weevely.

"I have an engagement with Mr. Williams, at nine," Keeneyes explained.

"Oh—but let him wait a few minutes."

"Pardon me, Mr. Weevely, I am punctuality itself."

"But I am just about to tell you all about the diamonds."

"Yes, it's too bad, but I have no time to hear your confession. Oh, well, it's of no consequence, anyhow. You could tell me nothing I don't know. You've shown your willingness to make a clean breast of it, and that's the main point."

"But you can't possibly know what I am about to tell you, sir."

"Well, I'm sorry," said Keeneyes, bowing politely, "but really I must deprive myself of the pleasure of your confession!"

And he left the office, stepping briskly. Weevely was profoundly impressed.

He leaped to his feet and hurried to the door.

"Mr. Zellers!" he called.

"Well?"

"What—what are you going to do about it?"

"About you, Mr. Weevely?" called Keeneyes, not pausing on his way up the street. "I will let you know before I take any action."

He passed out of sight, closely followed by Uncle Nuzzer, who dared not look back.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SUSPICIONS.

Precisely at nine o'clock, Keeneyes entered the bank of the village.

President Williams was waiting for him, and led the way immediately to his little private office. Here they seated themselves, and Williams said at once, "Mr. Zellers, you tell me that you know of secret connected with my life."

"Precisely so."

"You tell me that that secret is connected with diamonds."

"Well," returned the detective, "what would you say it is connected with?"

"Perhaps you are right."

"Perhaps?" echoed the detective, with displeasure.

"Certainly it relates to diamonds. You are quite right. And I wish to assure you at the beginning, Mr. Zellers, that I have no desire to antagonize you.

"Ah? Then it seems to me that your attitude has altered."

"It has in fact, altered materially."

"May I ask why so?"

"In fact, Mr. Zellers, my first intention was to compel you to leave town."

"Lest I discover your secret?"

"Yes."

"And now you have found that I already know your secret, so you will let me stay?"

"It is not altogether that. I am not convinced that you know my secret."

"Indeed! That is odd! Shall I tell it to you, myself?"

The banker interposed hastily, with: "I say, it is not altogether that. Whether you know the secret, or only guess at a part of it, that is not what has altered my attitude."

"What, then?"

"You have forced me to respect you, Mr. Zellers; and I am at the point of wishing your help. Come! Can I have your services?"

"You wish to employ me as a detective?"

"I do."

"To find out what I already know? That is unusual!"

"If you already know it, I will employ you to reveal it to me. It does me no good for you to know the secret. I want to know it myself," cried Williams, in perplexity.

"You don't know your own secret?"

"I know my part of it, of course, but not the other. I have a terrible dread—a —fear—a shame—I don't know how to express my uneasiness.

"I presume you know that the diamonds are stolen?"

"Good heavens, yes! I ought to know it! That is the whole difficulty."

"You mean that you don't know who stole them?"

"I don't know who took them away," Williams admitted.

"But you suspect somebody?"

"Perhaps I do."

"Weevely for instance?"

"Weevely? Of course not! What has Weevely to do with my affairs?"

"You think the thief is someone who has an intimate connection with your affairs?"

"I think the person—yes, or—the persons must have necessarily."

"But you don't like to hear this person called 'thief.' I observe," remarked Keeneyes, thoughtfully.

"What is that?"

"And you don't like that word 'steal.'

"Well—no—I don't—it seems a harsh word."

"Harsh words are at times very useful."

"Yes—when used under proper circumstances."

"Then you must have a high regard for the person you suspect; it is young Caldwell, possibly?"

"Caldwell? Preposterous!"

"Some member of you church, possibly."

"Really, Mr. Zellers," said Williams restlessly, "you pretended to know this secret, and now prove that you are entirely at sea."

Keeneyes smiled. "If I am at sea, Mr. Williams, you have brought out a safe boat to land me."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you, yourself, have confessed to me whom you suspect."

"Impossible!"

"No, it is a fact. You suspect no one but your daughter. That is why you speak of 'shame.' And that is why you wanted me away from twon; you did not want her culpability exposed. She eloped with somebody, or at all events, disap-

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peared, while you thought her safe with friends in Little Rock. The diamonds disappeared at the same time. You had forbidden her marriage to Caldwell. You imagine that in anger, or wildness, she has revenged herself by going away either alone, or with some other lover. And you think she has the diamonds."

Williams turned scarlet. He did not answer.

"Does your wife share this suspicion?" demanded Zellers.

"Yes—er—yes, she believes——"

"In fact, she suggested it to you, didn't she?"

"Perhaps she mentioned it first."

"But at heart, Mr. Williams, do you believe in your daughter's guilt?"

"No—no—I mean—I don't know what to think. There was nobody else——"

"There is always somebody else," cried Keeneyes, "and I shall prove before this day closes, that your daughter is entirely innocent."

Williams started up with a cry of joyful hope.

CHAPTER XXV.

TO KILL CALDWELL.

For the moment the banker looked fixedly at the detective.

Then he said.

"Mr. Zellers, if you can show me that my daughter did not—not——"

"Steal?" suggested Keeneyes.

"Did not take the diamonds, and that she is—er—that she is——"

"Is not a thief?" remarked the other dryly.

"If you can prove this, sir," exclaimed Mr. Williams, "you will make the happiest man in Cobbville."

"I presume, then, that the suspicion of your daughter has made you one of the most miserable?"

"It has."

"So that, for some time, you have not been yourself."

"That is, no doubt, true enough."

"I am glad of it: for I should like to meet a different kind of Williams from the one who insulted me on my arrival."

"You now find me a different man, Mr. Zellers."

"In that case, I have no doubt you are reasonable; and as a reasonable man, I will converse with you. I have not had the honor of meeting your daughter, but it does not seem likely that she would have stolen your diamonds——"

"My wife's diamonds," interposed Williams.

"Yes? And your wife and your daughter were not on the best of terms, I take it."

"They never seemed to understand one another."

"That is customary among women," said Keeneyes. "But let it go; whatever is human nature we must let go; we can't help it. Let it go. They didn't love each other; so you thought your daughter could take her stepmother's diamonds when she would never dream of taking anybody else's."

"Yes—she might feel, in a way, that she had a right to them," Williams suggested.

"Precisely; as the spoils of war, so to speak—or matrimony; or patrimony, as it were. Mrs. Williams, being a second wife, might seem to your daughter to have entered into some of her rights that might accrue from the incident of nature whereby being the child of your first wife——"

"Really, Mr. Zellers, I quite understand. We need not go into it. Shall we not follow your suggestion and—and let it go?"

"We shall do so. Now, Mr. Williams I have an appointment with your wife in less than an hour, to discuss these diamonds. What do you say to our postponing our conversation until then?"

"I say, by no means?"

"May I ask why? You want an elucidation, and so does she."

"It is different."

"How?"

"If you will excuse me, I would rather not be explicit."

"Good. Then let me be explicit. Mrs. Williams wants the mystery cleared up, because it is her desire to fasten the theft upon your daughter. You are afraid to have the mystery cleared up, for fear it will incriminate your daughter."

"You speak with cruel frankness, Mr. Zellers."

"Thank you, Mr. Williams. You could pay me no higher compliment. Now, since I have told you that your daughter did not take the diamonds, you have nothing to fear in the revelation. And your wife has nothing to hope for."

"To hope for?"

"Yes, to hope for; for I tell you frankly that your wife would like to implicate your daughter."

Williams sighed.

Then he said, as from afterthought, "But there are the diamonds to be recovered. That is something for both of us to hope for."

"Pooh!"

"Sir?"

"I said 'Pooh,' that was all. It was my way of expressing the fact that Mrs. Williams does not care so much for the jewelry as for getting your daughter in her power."

"Why should she wish to get her in her power?"

"Because she is a woman."

"If she got her in her power, how would she exercise it?"

"In no way."

"Then how would that disturb my daughter?"

"Ah, but your daughter would all the time be thinking that she would exercise her power. But you see, the moment she exercised it, the power would be gone."

"I don't understand what you mean."

"I mean that if your wife tells you where your daughter is, then, she would no longer have any threat to hold over your daughter's head."

"But Mrs. Williams has no idea where my daughter is."

"Pardon me—she knows perfectly where she is."

The banker sprang to his feet. "What! She knows where Sallie is?"

"To the inch."

"And has not gone to her?"

"Of course she has gone to her."

"But you—do you know where my daughter is, Mr. Zellers?"

Keeneyes laughed. "Of course I do."

"In Little Rock?"

"Little Rock? Nonsense!"

"But where is she, then? I insist upon knowing at once. I will go to her, too. Why has my wife hidden this knowledge from me?"

"I have already told you—so your wife can get her in her power."

"By threatening to tell me where she is?"

"You have it, exactly."

"But why did she run away, and why is she hiding now, if she didn't——"

"Didn't steal the diamonds?"

"If she didn't take them, sir."

"She is afraid of you."

Williams stared blankly at the detective.

Then he cried out abruptly: "In Heaven's name tell me everything, or I shall go mad!"

"I am trying to break it to you gradually."

"But, heavens! man, you will break me, before you finish."

"Well, then, in a word, your daughter eloped with young Caldwell; they married; they came back to this village; Caldwell has her hidden in his new cottage, where they are living together secretly; your wife has found it out, and has gone there at midnight to threaten your daughter with publicity if she doesn't reveal where the diamonds are stowed away; your daughter is aware that circumstantial evidence is against her, and dares not face you and the rest of the world. I have been in the house, have learned all this, have told Caldwell that I knew everything—"

"As I am a living man," cried Williams, purple with rage, "I will go and kill that villain!"

He darted to his private desk, and pounced upon a pistol.

CHAPTER XXVI

MAKING THREE FRIENDS.

Keeneyes calmly watched the banker, as the latter possessed himself of his pistol. Williams examined the weapon, while his hand shook with passion. He muttered something between clenched teeth.

Then he said hoarsely: "So Caldwell married her, did he? And they are living in this town, are they, living here under our very eyes, while we scour the country for her, and see him every day—the wretch!"

Then Williams noted the calm gaze of Keeneyes.

It seemed to incense him more than ever.

"You needn't look that way," he burst forth. "You needn't think you are going to stop me, sir."

"My dear Mr. Williams——"

"No, no no! Honeyed words don't go in a crisis like this."

"Honeyed words?" cried Keeneyes, genuinely annoyed. "Are you accusing me of using honeyed words?"

"I don't care what you call them," retorted Williams, starting for the door. "I'm done with soft talk. I shall proceed to act."

"Mr. Williams——"

"It's no use to interfere; I mean to kill that Caldwell like a dog!"

"Go and kill him," said Keeneyes, coldly. "Who is interfering? What I object to, is to be accused of uttering 'honeyed words,' and 'soft talk.' I will ask you to retract those expressions, sir."

"Stand out of my way, Mr. Zellers, I am a desperate man."

"I'll stand out of your way when you retract those offensive and unwarrantable words. I have never used honeyed words."

"I don't care what you use——"

"Have I used honeyed words to you, Mr. Williams?"

"No. But you are trying to check my revenge."

"I am not. Go and kill young Caldwell. Is that soft talk?"

"Mr. Zellers, I am a distracted man. I do not know what I said to you. I retract all that is objectionable, only let me go. My daughter has disgraced my family——"

Keeneyes stepped out of the doorway and said.

"Go on, then, and disgrace it some more!"

Williams hesitated a moment, and muttered, "You're trying to spare the wretch's life."

"Just Heaven!" cried Keeneyes, "don't I tell you to go ahead and murder? What more can I do? Shall I bring your vic-

(Continued on page 25.)

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BOY'S
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CORNER

THE MERRY GOOSE MINE;

Or, Dan Newton's Up-Hill Fight

By WILL LISENBEE

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CHAPTER XVII.

"WELL, my boy; what can I do for you?" asked the storekeeper, who was a pleasant-faced man of fifty.

"My friend and I would like to see you privately for a few moments," replied Dan. "This is Captain Hickman, Mr. Ables."

The Captain and the groceryman shook hands.

"Glad to meet you, Captain," said Ables. "Just step this way."

He led the way to the back end of the store, where there was a desk and some chairs behind a railing.

"This is as near as I can approach having a private office at present," apologized the proprietor, as he placed seats for his visitors and took one himself. "But we shall be free from interruption."

"We have called," began the captain, "to acquaint you with an important discovery my young friend here made last night. It is of interest to yourself and the Henderson Smelting Company as [illegible]."

"[illegible], indeed!" cried Ables. "I shall be glad to hear the young man's story."

"You can tell the story, Dan," said the captain.

Dan did as directed, telling of the conversation he had overheard between the two strangers on the bank of the river the night before, and giving in detail every word he could remember of it.

The groceryman looked aghast.

"This is, indeed, important!" he cried [illegible], you have rendered us a great service. Would you recognize the men if you should see them again?"

"I am afraid not, sir," replied Dan. "It was too dark to see their faces distinctly."

"So I suppose. Could you give a rough description of them?"

"Yes, sir. One was a man of middle age, apparently, with a short dark beard. He was rather heavy of build. His companion was of spare build, and was much younger than the other, if I guessed correctly."

"Very good. This may be valuable in establishing their identity. It isn't probable that they discovered your presence before they left the spot where they were conversing?"

"No, sir; I am sure they didn't. I took good care of that."

"Which was very prudent," nodded the grocer. "They are desperate men and might have harmed you."

"That is what I thought."

At this juncture the clerk approached the desk near by with the ostensible purpose of making some entries in an account book, but with the real intent to overhear, if possible, the conversation between the visitors and his employer.

Mr. Ables glanced toward him with a slight frown of impatience.

"Mark, the business I have with these gentlemen is private," he said.

"Oh, I beg your pardon, I didn't aim to intrude," he said, coloring as he hastily withdrew.

"Wait a moment," called the grocer. "You may go tell Mr. Gage that I desire to see him immediately on important business."

"Yes, sir," replied the clerk, and he [illegible].

"Mr. Gage is the cashier of the Henderson Smelting Company," explained Mr. Ables. "I want him to hear the boy's story. Meantime, we will wait till he arrives before going further into the matter, if you can oblige us by waiting."

"Certainly," replied the captain. "We will wait."

"Thank you. Mr. Gage will be here in a few moments." He took a box of cigars from the desk and passed them to his guests. The captain took one, but Dan said:

"I thank you, Mr. Ables, but I never smoke."

"I am glad to hear you say that," nodded Mr. Ables approvingly. "I shouldn't advise any boy to smoke. It is a costly and useless habit."

"I got in the habit of smoking when I was at sea," remarked the captain. "Sailors, as a rule, use tobacco."

"So I have understood," said Ables. "Is this young man a relative of yours, captain?"

"No sir. He is a friend who came with me from up the river. We are getting ready to put down a shaft on the Murphy tract."

"I hope you will strike it rich," said the grocer. "But you haven't told me the young man's name. After he has rendered me so valuable a service, I think you should favor me with an introduction"

"That's right," sanctioned the captain. "This is Dan Newton, Mr. Ables. It has been a great pleasure to me to know him."

"I can well believe that," nodded Mr. Ables, extending his hand to Dan. "I am glad to share in your pleasure."

At this juncture Mr. Gage arrived and was introduced to Captain Hickman and Dan.

"They have brought some very startling news," said Ables, and at his request Dan repeated his story.

The face of the cashier was the picture of amazement.

"This is indeed, important," he exclaimed. "We must take some steps to [illegible] rascals."

"That will not be hard to do," remarked the proprietor. "We can have the officers lying in wait, and as the robbers will suspect nothing of the kind, they will walk into the trap."

"And you say that one of the men was [illegible] and the other [illegible]," the cashier asked of Dan.

"Yes, sir; those were the names they used in addressing each other."

"Do you know any one bearing either of these names?" the cashier asked of Mr. Ables.

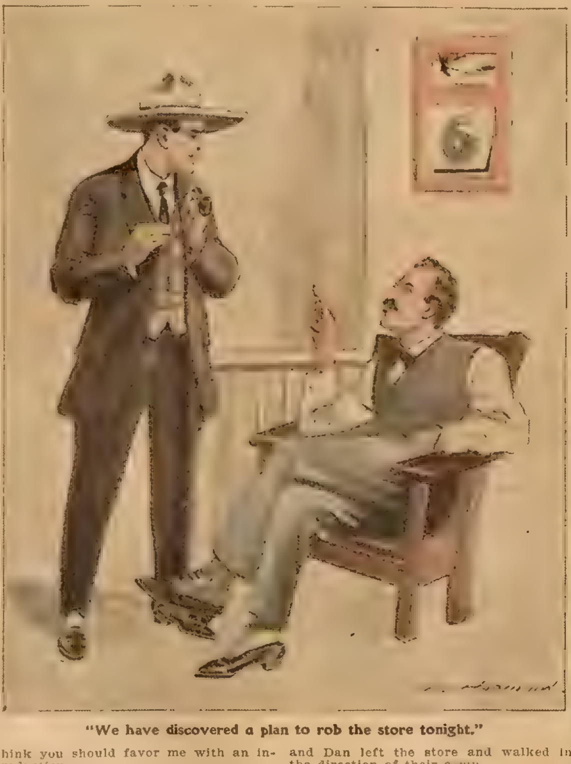
"No, I don't. 'Silver' is probably a nickname, such as is given to gamblers and crooks."

"That is right. The constable might know. We must see him at once. But we must act with caution. It would not be prudent for us to be seen in consultation with officers."

"No. I think I can manage that."

"Very well," answered the cashier. He turned to the visitors. "You have done us a most valuable service," he said. "We shall not forget that."

A few minutes later Captain Hickman and Dan left the store and walked in the direction of their camp



"We have discovered a plan to rob the store tonight."

CHAPTER XVIII

About an hour after Captain Hickman and Dan had left the store, the constable sauntered in leisurely. After making a small purchase and assuring himself that his movements had not been watched, he walked to the rear of the building where he found Mr. Ables awaiting him.

The constable, who also acted as town marshal, was a man of good judgment and cool courage.

"You wanted to see me," he said. "Is anything in the wind?"

"A good deal," answered Ables. "We have discovered a plot to rob the store tonight."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes."

"How did you find it out?"

"A boy who overheard the plot has just told us. Do you know any man by the name of 'Silver'?"

"Why yes," replied the officer. "There's a gambler in town by that name. A very shady fellow."

"Yes. Is he one of the parties?"

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"Yes, and the other answered to the name of 'Dave'," and Ables repeated the story as told by Dan Newton.

The officer gave vent to a low whistle. "I think I have both the chaps spotted," he said. "The one mentioned as 'Dave' is doubtless Dave Stover, a rather shady character who has been hanging about the drinking and gambling houses for several days."

"Have you seen him today?"

"No, but I think I can put my hands on him without much trouble. He has been hanging out in a cabin with some others of his kind over in the hollow, east of town."

"And the one called 'Silver'?"

"Oh, he can be picked up almost any time. I saw him not an hour ago."

"It wouldn't be worth while to run them in on what evidence we have?"

"Not a bit. We would not be able to convict them, even if the boy could identify them, as they might claim that the whole affair was a joke."

"Then we shall have to lay a trap for them?"

"Yes, that is best."

"You ought to have two or three trusty men with you."

"I can get them."

"Then we will leave the arrangements to you. I will see Mr. Page and tell him of our plans."

A few minutes later the marshal left the store.

Meantime, Captain Hickman and Dan had returned to their camp and were taking a survey of the lot on which they were to begin work. The captain selected a level place in a slight depression near the center of the lot as the best spot for the location of the shaft.

"As a rule," he observed, as he marked off the place, "one is likely to find open ground at the lowest point of a lot. We want to avoid getting down on a flint or limestone bar."

They spent the evening in getting ready for work. Captain Hickman had brought a number of tools with him, and he lacked nothing but a windlass and some tubs, which he was able to get at one of the stores where miners' supplies were kept.

When the work was finished, Dan went down the valley to a spring for a bucket of water. As he was passing a waste dump he heard angry voices coming from the other side of the dump. Then came the sound of a sob and the words:

"Give it back to me, I tell you. It is mine——"

The voice trailed off into a sob.

As Dan came round the dump he saw a poor boy of about ten standing on a pile of waste dirt. He was poorly clad and carried a rusty tin bucket in one hand, while the other was lifted to wipe away the tears that were running down his cheeks. A short distance away stood another boy of perhaps sixteen. He held a dirty sack open at the mouth and was in the act of thrusting a large piece of mineral into it.

"What's the matter?" Dan asked, stopping and gazing from one to the other.

"It is none of your business," snapped the one with the sack.

"He took that piece of mineral from me after I had found it!" broke in the small boy. "Please make him give it back."

"He had better not try it," cried the other, casting an angry glance at Dan.

"Did you take that piece of mineral from that little boy?" asked Dan.

"It is none of your business," was the reply.

"I am not so sure about that," remarked Dan. "If you have taken what belongs to that little boy, I shall make it my business."

"You'd better not," warned the other.

"Bob Sears is always picking on little boys," interposed the small boy. "He knows he is, and I wish some one would give him a licking."

"Look here, Sid," cried the other, "if you don't shut your mouth I'll come and spank you. As for this fellow licking me, I can lick him with one hand tied behind me!"

As he spoke he cast a defiant glance at Dan.

"I guess there is no need of our having any fight," Dan said in a quiet tone. "But you must give back that piece of mineral."

"I must? Well, that is a pretty good joke!"

He flung the sack over his shoulder and started to walk away.

Dan stepped resolutely in front of him.

"I'll trouble you to give that piece of mineral back to the one it belongs to," he said.

The boy with the sack threw back his head and laughed. He was the recognized bully among the boys at the mines, and few there were who dared cross him. He was strong and of athletic build, and so sure was he of being able to administer a good drubbing to the strange youth that he laughed with pleasure in anticipation of an easy victory.

Bob Sears and Sid Akers—for such were the names of the two boys—were what is known in the mines as "scrappers." This, I am glad to say, has no reference to the fighting qualities of the boys, but derived the name from their occupation, which was to gather scraps of mineral from the waste dumps at the mines and from the tailing piles at the washplaces. The earnings of the scrapper, though usually small, were often far from being insignificant, some making as much as four dollars a day. This, of course, must be considered as an exception, as the average scrapper earned but forty cents to a dollar a day.

As a rule scrappers were treated with kindness by the miners, who had no objections to the waste piles being culled, but there were scrappers, I am sorry to say, who were not entirely honest and would not hesitate to cull pieces of mineral from the wash dirt when they got a chance. Bob Sears belonged to this class, and in consequence was in ill repute among the miners.

He was disliked generally by the men about the mines, and his bullying ways made him unpopular with the youths of the camp.

"So you think you can stop me?" he said to Dan. "If you don't get out of my way, I'll bump your head for you."

As he spoke he deposited his sack on the ground and began to roll up his sleeves.

A couple of miners, who were passing, now stopped to watch the result.

"I shall look out for my head since you are kind enough to warn me," observed Dan, composedly. "But you took a piece of mineral from the boy on the dump there, and you must give it back to him."

"By gum! I like the pluck of that strange boy whoever he is!" said one of the miners, an elderly man, in an undertone to his companion. "I hope he'll fool Bob Sears."

"So do I," nodded the other.

Bob Sears threw a glance of contempt at Dan.

"I see I shall have to give you a lickin'," he said. "Now watch me bump your head!"

He dashed forward as he spoke and aimed a blow full at Dan's face, but it was spent on the empty air, for in some strange way—how the onlookers could not tell—Dan was not there. He had slipped aside at the very instant the other's fist was almost touching him, and the next instant Bob Sears was tripped and fell headlong in the dusty road.

"By gum! That was as perty a job as I ever seed done out in a prize ring!" cried the miner who had first spoken.

As may well be supposed, Bob was amazed and mortified at the unexpected result of his attack. But he was on his feet in an instant. His face was aflame with anger, and he pulled himself together for another attack.

CHAPTER XIX.

"I don't want any trouble with you," said Dan quietly, "but don't try that on me again."

"Won't I though!" cried Bob, and with this he dashed at Dan like a mad bull. But another surprise awaited him. This time Dan did not wait for the attack, but with amazing swiftness that astonished those who witnessed it, he leaped forward like a flash to meet his assailant. They were almost together when Dan ducked his head as he stooped, and the next instant his head came in contact with his antagonist's stomach with such force that Bob was doubled up like a jack-knife and fell in a heap limp and gasping for breath.

"He's knocked out the bully the second round, by gum!" cried the miner, in amazed admiration.

"He sure has," nodded the other.

With an effort Bob raised himself to a sitting posture and looked about him in stupefied bewilderment. But he

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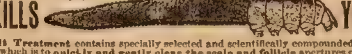

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showed no disposition to renew the attack.

Dan turned to the boy on the dump.

"You may come and pick out the piece of mineral that was taken from you," he said.

Sid was quick to respond. He leaped to the sack and drew out a piece of lead ore weighing about a pound and dropped it into his bucket.

"Gee whiz! You've licked Bob Sears!" he cried. "All the boys will be afraid of you."

"I hope not," responded Dan. "I think I should be ashamed of myself if they were."

Sid looked curiously at Dan. He couldn't understand.

"I'd feel proud if I could do what you did," he said.

Bob Sears, who had made no attempt to rise to his feet, looked about him as if trying to discover the cause of his defeat.

"How did you do it?" he asked in a weak voice.

"Why, you bumped his head," retorted the miner.

"I? How?"

"Bumped it agin yer stumick," laughed the miner.

"Well, I shan't do it agin," Bob declared

"Did it hurt you?" asked Dan, his face softening.

"Well, you didn't do me any good," replied Bob with a queer grimace.

Dan stepped forward and helped him to rise.

"I am sorry," he said. "I didn't mean to hurt you. But I wanted to keep from being hurt if I could."

"Do you mean that?" asked Bob in surprise.

"Yes."

"Then let's shake hands."

"With all my heart," responded Dan, taking the extended had. "I hope we shall be friends."

"So do I."

Dan took up his bucket and walked on in the direction of the spring.

"Well, that's a manly way to settle it, boys," observed the miner. "I guess the little difficulty won't do ye any harm."

As Dan was returning with the bucket of water, Sid Akers fell in with him and walked by his side.

"You are a bully good fighter," Sid ventured. "It was good of you to get my mineral back and lick Bob Sears."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, I am glad I got your mineral back for you, but sorry I had the trouble with Bob Sears."

"You are a funny boy, but I like you," said Sid. "What is your name?"

"Dan Newton."

"Mine is Sid Akers. Do you live in [illegible]?"

"Not at present."

"Do you work in the mines?"

"I expect to."

"Will you come and see me sometime—or are you too big to visit a little boy like me?"

"I guess I'm not too big," smiled Dan. "Where do you live?"

"In the little cabin in the hollow down yonder," and he pointed to the spot which was but a short distance from Dan's place of abode.

"I'll come and see you. Do you live with your parents?"

"I live with my mother. My father is dead."

"Do you have to work for your living?"

"Yes. I scrap and my mother washes."

"Do you make much?"

"About forty cents a day. Sometimes I make more than that."

"Where do you sell the mineral you get?"

"At the smelting works or at any of the stores. They pay a little more at the smelter, but they don't buy less than fifty pounds, and we don't often have that much."

"Wouldn't it pay you to keep it till you got fifty pounds?" asked Dan.

"I guess it would if a feller didn't need the money. I generally need mine. Then the stores pay almost as much as the smelter people, if you take it in trade, which is all the same if you want to spend the money."

"I guess you're right. Well, goodby, Sid. Come around and see me. I live up there in that tent."

"I shall. I'll come around and take a ride in the big goose some time."

"All right; I'll look for you."

On his return Dan found the captain engaged in preparing supper.

"I was delayed a little," observed Dan.

"So I thought. What happened?"

Dan explained.

"Served him right," was the captain's verdict.

The next morning the work of sinking the shaft was commenced. As but one person could work at a time, the captain and Dan took turns at the pick and shovel, which made the work light for both.

"I'm afraid you are doing more than your share," Dan observed, when the captain persisted in keeping at work the greater portion of the time.

"I'm not hurting myself a bit," replied the captain. "Besides, this is my work. After we get down a little I'll let you run the windlass and I'll do the digging."

"I wonder if they caught the robbers last night," said Dan.

"I'd like to know. We'll go up town and see, after a little. We'll have to get the picks sharpened anyway."

An hour later they entered the grocery of Mr. Ables.

"Glad to see you, gentlemen," greeted the grocer, affably. "You heard the news, I suppose?"

"No, we just came from the mines," replied the captain.

"Well, the officer and his men nabbed the two gents who plotted to rob the store."

"Indeed!" cried the captain. "Then they came according to program?"

"Yes, and they are now in the lockup, at the county seat."

"That's good. Who were they?"

"The same fellows the marshall suspected—Silver, the gambler and Dave Stover. They were greatly surprised when they were nabbed in the act. They evidently suspected some one of betraying them. It was a nice piece of work."

"If they saw us in camp on the river that night they may suspect us of having overheard their plot," said Dan. "Do you think that possible, Mr. Ables?"

"Hardly; still, such might be the case. In any event it won't matter, for they are safely in the county jail where they are not likely to do any further harm."

The grocer went on to give the details of the capture, and when he had finished he added, turning to Dan: "You have done us a valuable service, my boy. Mr. Gage wants to see you, and told me to ask you to call at his office."

While the captain went to the blacksmith shop, Dan walked in the direction of Mr. Gage's office

CHAPTER XX.

Dan found Mr. Gage in his office near the smelting works. It was a neat frame building and had recently been built.

"We have just moved in, as you may guess," he said as he greeted Dan pleasantly. "We haven't got all our furniture here yet, but will have it this week, including our safe. Then we shall have no fears of being robbed. I suppose Mr. Ables told you of the successful nabbing of the robbers last night?"

"Yes, sir."

"It was a lucky circumstance that enabled you to give us warning. Otherwise we might have been some thousands of dollars the loser and the robbers still at large. Are you engaged in working in the mines?"

"Yes, sir; I am working for Captain Hickman."

"You are rather young for such work."

"The work I do is not hard. Mr Hickman is very kind to me and insists on giving me plenty of time to rest."

"I am glad to hear it. He seems to be a very kind and pleasant gentleman."

"He is, sir, and I feel that I am fortunate in having him for an employer."

"You show the right spirit. No doubt Captain Hickman has made a wise choice. Are your parents living?"

"No, sir."

"Then you have to make your own way in the world?"

"Yes, sir."

"I believe you will succeed."

"Thank you, sir. I shall do my best."

"I am sure you will. If at any time I can assist you, you have but to let me know."

"I shall, sir. You are very kind."

As Dan rose to go the cashier said: "By the way, here is a small acknowledgment of the services you rendered us."

He drew an envelope from his desk and gave it to Dan.

"You must come in and see me," he added, "and you can say to Captain Hickman that if he needs any assistance in getting his shaft down to notify us."

As Dan left the office he opened the envelope. To his amazement it contained five ten-dollar bills.

His face flushed with sudden joy.

"Fifty dollars!" he murmured incredulously. "Why, it is more than I can earn in a month!"

He thrust the envelope and bills into his pocket and hurried on his way.

A little further on he overtook Captain Hickman.

"You saw Mr. Gage?" asked the Captain.

"Yes, sir, and see what he gave me!" cried Dan, drawing out the envelope and the bills

"Fifty dollars," murmured the captain. "Why, that is a nice little sum, Dan. It was kind of Mr. Gage."

"Could he have made a mistake?" asked Dan, suddenly.

"Not a bit of it. It was quite proper to reward you."

"I hope they did not think I expected it." Dan said.

"I am sure they did not. That is doubtless what added to the pleasure of giving the reward."

"You think I should keep it?"

The captain laughed softly.

"Do you remember what I told you when you didn't want to take the half-dollar I gave you for helping me with the Merry Goose?"

"I think I do."

"Then it is hardly necessary to tell you to keep the money. The smelting company is well able to reward you. You have saved them the loss of a large sum compared with what you received."

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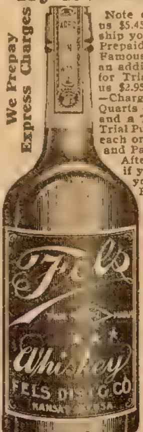

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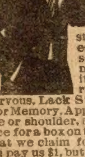

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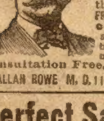

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"Then let us divide the money. I do not think I am entitled to all of it."

"Nonsense," cried the captain. "The money is yours. I could not think of taking any part of it."

"I shall call and thank Mr. Gage."

"That would be proper."

"He asked me to say to you that if you needed any assistance in getting your shaft sunk to call on him."

"Did he, indeed? Well, that was very kind of Mr. Gage," said the captain with a pleased look. "While I have more capital than I shall require in sinking the shaft, I feel deeply obliged to him all the same."

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* * *

The Mysterious Detective

(Continued from page 21.)

tim to you? Shall I notify the coroner to be on hand, and have a cell ready for you at the jail? Shall I wire the reporters to be on the spot, and send an advance order to the undertaker? If you are going to kill the young man, don't delay until your blood is cooled and you have a little sense in your head; go do it while you are crazy, so you will stand some show at your trial. Remember I'm the leading witness. You've told me you mean to assassinate your daughter's legally-married husband—let us say, your son-in-law. You've confessed the purpose. On the stand, I will testify that you were stark, staring mad, when you proposed the crime. But if you stand there cooling off and hesitating and deliberating, I shall be obliged to admit, on cross-examination, that you finally lapsed into a condition resembling sanity."

Williams flung the weapon against the opposite wall. It fell to the floor with a loud noise, but did not explode.

The banker fell into his revolving-chair, and buried his face in his arms.

"Think it over," said the detective, stalking majestically from the room.

Inwardly he was swelling with pride over his easy victory.

In the outer office, he encountered, among those who had come to transact business, young Caldwell.

Keeneyes had an idea. He drew the young man aside, and whispered earnest words. Caldwell nodded in violent assent.

The young man darted from the bank.

Keeneyes seated himself by the street window, and picked up a paper.

He perused the paper calmly.

After a long time, Mr. Williams appeared at the threshold of his private office.

He looked pale and ill.

Keeneyes walked over to him.

"Mr. Williams," he said, kindly, "shall we return to your private office and resume our conversation?"

"What more can you have to say?" stammered the banker. "You have already broken my heart——"

"Nonsen[illegible] you wife who objected to Cal[illegible] wasn't you. You are too sensible to object to a son-in-law of that sort. Your wife has worked you up against him, just as she means to work you up against your daughter. Come back, and let me tell you who has the diamonds."

"Ah, the diamonds! I forgot all about the diamonds," muttered the other, still dazed.

They went back to the inner room.

"I am expecting visitors," remarked Keeneyes as they seated themselves. "I mean, your visitors."

Mr. Williams looked at him mutely. He was stunned.

"Oh, here they are at last," said Keeneyes, as the door opened.

Caldwell entered, his wife leaning upon his arm.

"I have not had the honor——" murmured Keeneyes.

"Father!" cried Mrs. Caldwell, stretching her arms toward the banker.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AGAIN IN A HURRY.

For an instant, Mr. Williams hesitated to receive the embraces of his daughter. But it was only for a moment. The detective had rightly guessed.

It was really Mrs. Williams, and not the banker, who had objected to young Caldwell as a son-in-law.

In a short time, a perfect reconciliation was effected.

Keeneyes, who had gallantly stepped to the window, now faced about, and smiled upon the little family group.

Sallie Williams Caldwell perched upon her father's knee, and the banker still held Caldwell's hand.

"Ah!" said the detective, with satisfaction.

Caldwell hastened to take the detective's hand, expressing grateful appreciation of what the other had accomplished in his behalf. He presented his wife, but without saying anything about the midnight visit of the detective to his new house.

After the excitement, natural to the occasion, had subsided, the detective drew forth his watch.

"The time has come for me to have my interview with Mrs. Williams," he declared. "I regret exceedingly to tear myself——"

"But," interposed Mr. Williams, rousing himself, "you have not told us who stole the diamonds, or where they are, now."

"I am sorry," said Keeneyes; "but you have been so long about blessing your children, that the hour is up. Goodby—will see you later."

And the detective hastened away.

(Continued next week.)

* * *

The Roll-Call of the Reef.

(Continued from page nine.)

with me? When I was young, I betrayed a girl; and when I was grown, I betrayed a friend, and for these I must pay. But I died as a man ought. God save the King!'

"The trumpeter called to the next man, 'Trooper Henry Buckingham,' and the next man answered, 'Here.'

"'Trooper Henry Buckingham, how is it with you?'

"'How should it be with me? I was a drunkard, and I stole, and in Lugo, in a wine-shop, I killed a man. But I died as a man should. God save the King!'

"So the trumpeter went down the line; and when he had finished, the drummer took it up, hailing the dead marines in their order. Each man answered to his name, and each man ended with 'God save the King!' When all were hailed, the drummer stepped back to his mound, and called:

"'It is well. You are content, and we are content to join you. Wait, now, a little while.'

"With this he turned and ordered my father to pick up the lantern, and lead the way back. As my father picked it up, he heard the ranks of the dead men cheer and call, 'God save the King!' all together, and saw them waver and fade back into the dark, like a breath fading off a pane.

"But when they came back here to the kitchen, and my father set the lantern down, it seemed they'd both forgot about him. For the drummer turned in the lantern-light—and my father could see the blood still welling out of the hole in his breast—and took the trumpet-sling from around the other's neck, and locked drum and trumpet together again, choosing the letters on the lock very carefully. While he did this, he said:

"'The word is no more Corunna, but Bayonne. As you left out an "n" in Corunna, so must I leave out an "n" in Bayonne.' And before snapping the padlock, he spelt out the word slowly—'B-A-Y-O-N-E.' After that, he used no more speech; but turned and hung the two instruments back on the hook; and then took the trumpeter by the arm; and the pair walked out into the darkness, glancing neither to right nor left.

"My father was on the point of following, when he heard a sort of sigh behind him; and there, sitting in the elbow-chair, was the very trumpeter he had just seen walk out by the door! If my father's heart jumped before, you may believe it jumped quicker now. But after a bit, he went up to the man asleep in the chair and put a hand upon him. It was the trumpeter in flesh and blood

(Continued on page twenty-seven.)

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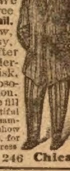

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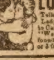

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THE FAIRY CORNER

JIMMY'S HALLOWE'EN.

It was one of the happiest Hallowe'en parties of the season that Jimmy and Mabel Barclow gave. All the usual Hallowe'en games had been played with unusual precision and enthusiasm up to the time that Jimmy proposed "the water and the salt trick."

"You just go around the block with your mouth full of water and your hands full of salt," said Jimmy, "and if you get all the way around without spilling a drop of water or a grain of salt the wish that you wish on the way will come true. If you laugh and swallow the water or forget to hold your band tightly doubled up your wish won't come true, so you have to be very careful and, of course, you can't speak to any one on the way."

All the boys and girls at the party said they thought it was a beautiful trick, until Jimmy added:

"And, of course, each one has to go alone."

There was a general falling off of enthusiasm and no one volunteered to go first. The Barclows lived on a block which, as Mrs. Barclow sometimes complained to the children's father, turned a very fair face to the world, but was more than doubtful in the rear. Just around the corner from the neat row of houses in which the Barclow's home was situated there stood a dilapidated row of shanties, in which many of the most dangerous characters in the town lived, and Mrs. Barclow, together with all the mothers of the respectable side of the block, never failed to warn the children of the dangers of this "shanty quarter."

But if the salt and water trick was to be properly done it was necessary to go past this very row of shanties, and in the evening, too, when the children knew the occupants of the shanties were particularly reckless. However, it was felt that no Hallowe'en game in good and regular standing could be ignored, and after a few moments of silent cogitation Jimmey himself offered to go first.

The others watched him start out with mingled feelings of admiration and fear. Jimmy doubled his fist tightly over the salt and puffed his cheeks stoutly over the water. It took him but a few moments to reach the corner and to turn from the brightly lighted street into the gloomy, narrow shanty alley.

As he had expected, the residents of the quarter were many of them upon the streets in spite of the cool evening, and those, who were not quarreling, and gossiping outside sat at their open windows joining now and again in the conversation.'

Prudent boy as he was, Jimmy had saved his wish up until he should need it. "I guess I'll wish to get safely around," he thought, just as the shanty quarter residents caught sight of him and raised a shout at his expense. But he took back the wish immediately. "No I won't, either," he thought; "I may need it worse than I do now," and he started to run past a shouting group of men and women.

A big hand caught him by the collar. "What are you making faces at?" asked a rough voice. Jimmy would have liked to explain that he wasn't making faces, but only holding water in his mouth, but he couldn't without losing his chance to wish, so he kept silent.

"Can't you say nothin'?" asked the man, sulkily,

Jimmy shook his head.

Half a dozen more men and women joined the man who held him. The hand on Jimmy's collar took so tight a grasp that it hurt him. Some of the rough men and women jostled him and some tried to trip him up. Jimmy was a prosperous boy, and as he saw the greed in his captors' eyes he remembered with a sinking heart that stowed away under his overcoat was his handsome new gold watch. "I must shout for help," thought Jimmy, "even if I do swallow the water and lose my chance to wish." Suddenly, while he still held on a moment longer, a cry came from the end of the street.

"Fight! Fight!" screamed a boy of about Jimmy's own age, rushing around the corner. The boy's face was wildly excited, and his red hair stood up in a thick mop.

Jimmy felt his captor's hold release itself, and with an answering cry he started in the direction from which the boy came with the other men and women at his heels.

Finding himself thus suddenly at liberty, Jimmy also began running around the block, when he found the red-haired boy following him.

"Say," said the red-haired boy. "It wasn't so much of a fight. I just seen they had you and I started 'em off."

Jimmy nodded a warm "Thank you."

"You'se ain't a-talkin'?" asked the red-haired boy.

Jimmy shook his head "no." He felt that it was discourteous not to explain when the red-haired boy had saved him from his foes. But after going through that adventure he was particularly anxious to reach the end of his journey without losing his chance to wish. He stood looking at the red-haired boy in perplexity until suddenly a thought occurred to him. He beckoned mysteriously and pointed in the direction of the Barclows' house.

The red-haired boy looked at him in amazement, and Jimmy put out the hand which did not contain salt and began dragging him by his ragged coat sleeve.

"Do you mean for me to go with you?" questioned his rescuer.

Jimmy nodded a violent "yes."

"Well, you're queer," said the red-haired boy, but he followed Jimmy, looking rather pleased.

He looked even more pleased when they reached their destination, and Jimmy dragged him up the steps of a house on the "good side of the block."

Once inside the house and his task completed, Jimmy dropped the salt and swallowed the water instantly. Explanations were due both to the strange boy and the party.

"I did it," he said briefly to the party "and he saved me. It's a Hallowe'en trick," he explained to the boy, "and this is a Hallowe'en party. You are invited. What is your name?"

"Mickey Grogan," said the red-haired boy. "I was never to a Hallowe'en party, but I like 'em." He grinned cheerfully.

"Oh, Jimmy, then your wish will come true," said Mabel. "I hope it was a good one."

"I forgot to make any," confessed Jimmy.

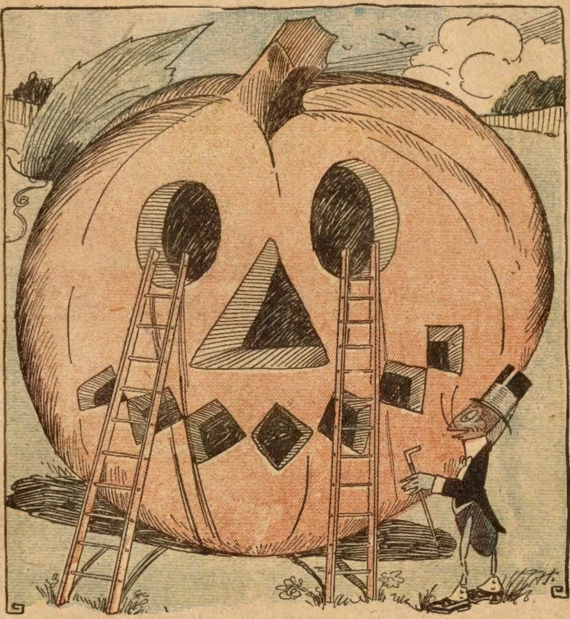
*

Voice of Discontent.

"Had much rain around here lately?"

"No," replied Farmer Corntossel. "Jes' enough to keep the summer boarders kickin' an' not enough to help crops."

HALLOWE'EN FLATS.

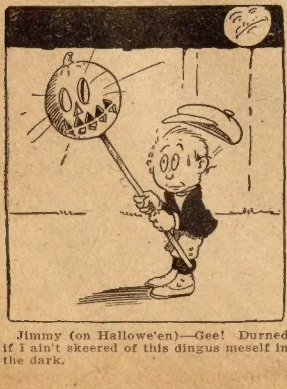


As Mr. Roach was strolling
  Along the boulevard,
He saw a great big pumpkin
  Over in his neighbor's yard.

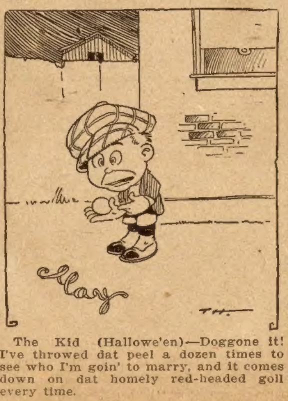
The pumpkin was the funniest
  That he had ever seen;
It had been used to celebrate
  A happy Hallowe'en.

A rich landlord was Mr. Roach—
  At once he saw the chance
To rent this pumpkin furnished;
  The thougnt just made him dance.

He put a sign up, "FLATS TO LET"—
  Now he's a millonaire.
For every roach in Bugville
  Is now residing there.



Jimmy (on Hallowe'en)—Gee! Durned if I ain't skeered of this dingus meself in the dark.



The Kid (Hallowe'en)—Doggone it! I've throwed dat peel a dozen times to see who I'm goin' to marry, and it comes down on dat homely red-headed goll every time.

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The Roll-Call of the Reef.

(Continued from page 25.)

that he touched; but though the flesh was warm, the trumpeter was dead.

"Well, sir, they buried him three days after; and at first my father was minded to say nothing about his dream (as he thought it). But the day after the funeral, he met Parson Kendall coming from Helston market; and the parson called out: 'Have 'ee heard the news the coach brought down this mornin'?' 'What news?' says my father. 'Why, that peace is agreed upon.' 'None too soon,' says my father. 'Not soon enough for our lads at Bayonne,' the parson answered. 'Bayonne!' cries my father, with a jump. 'Why, yes;' and the parson told him all about a great sally the French had made on the night of Apri 13. 'Do you happen to know if the Thirty-eighth Regiment was engaged?' my father asked. 'Come, now,' said Parson Kendall. 'I didn't know you was so well up in the campaign. But, as it happens, I do know that the Thirty-eighth was engaged, for 'twas they that held a cottage and stopped the French advance.'

"Still my father held his tongue; and when, a week later, he walked into Helston and bought a 'Mercury' off the Sherborne rider, and got the landlord of the 'Angel' to spell out the list of killed and wounded, sure enough, there among the killed was Drummer John Christian, of the Thirty-eighth Foot.

"After this there was nothing for a religious man but to make a clean breast. So my father went up to Parson Kendall, and told the whole story. The parson listened, and put a question or two, and then asked:

"'Have you tried to open the lock since that night?'

"'I haven't dared to touch it,' says my father.

"'Then come along and try.' When the parson came to the cottage here, he took the things off the hook and tried the lock. 'Did he say "Bayonne?" The word has seven letters.'

"'Not if you spell it with one "n" as he did,' says my father.

"The parson spelt it out—'B-A-Y-O-N-E'. 'Whew!' says he, for the lock had fallen open in his hand.

"He stood considering it a moment, and then he says: 'I tell you what. I shouldn't blab this all round the parish, if I was you. You won't get no credit for truth-telling, and a miracle's wasted on a set of fools. But if you like, I'll shut down the lock again upon a holy word that no one but me shall know, and neither drummer nor trumpeter, dead or alive, shall frighten the secret out of me.'

"'I wish to heaven you would, parson,' said my father.

"The parson chose the holy word there and then, and shut the lock back upon it, and hung the drum and trumpet back in their place. He is gone long since, taking the word with him. And till the lock is broken by force, nobody will ever separate those two."

The end.

* * *

The House of Fear.

(Continued from page thirteen.)

pocket, and she brought forth a greenish-looking phial.

"I will bring him out of it," she said, tugging at the cork, but that instant my hand shot forward and grasped her wrist.

A cry was on Flavia's lips.

"He is better now," I said, looking Teresa Hope in the face. "He needs no help at your hands," and while my grip loosened at her wrist, the hand that held the will behind my back tightened with new resolution.

"As you will, plotter!" was hissed from the lips before me, and the next moment the woman was gone.

At a wave from Rostan Gosnold I replaced the papers in the book, which I restored to its place on the shelf, and when I went out upon the porch for a breath of fresh air, I heard a voice a few feet away.

"I am off, Miss Reynolds. Keep watch and ward over Annabelle."

"I wish you victory, Reginald," I called after the speaker. "There is more than mere death in this accursed house," and then I lost him among the trees that interposed themselves between me and the end of the leaf-dotted path.

This extremely interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger. If you are not a subscriber to the Ledger, you are strongly urged to send in your subscription at once.

* * *

It Disperses Them.

"How does she get rid of her undesirable callers?"

"Why, she has made up a scrapbook of magazine poetry, and she gives it to the callers to read while she is out of the room."

* * *

Munchausen.

Marks—Bings has trained his cat to bring his slippers.

Parks—That's nothing. I know a writer on horticulture who has trained cut worms to sharpen his pencil.

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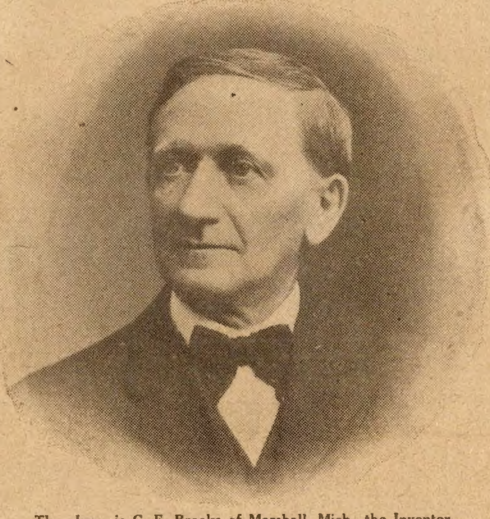
After Thirty Years' Experience I Have Produced an Appliance for Men, Women and Children That Actually Cures Rupture

Are You Ruptured?

If so, the BROOKS APPLIANCE is made for You; You and all other Men, Women and Children who are sufferers from this annoying and dangerous trouble. That truss you have been wearing—one of many you have tried—chafed and irritated you and was worse than nothing. It had springs and pads and harness and straps and fixings galore and was continually getting out of shape—slipping down or working up and always needing attention. Then, there were salves and washes and ointments to make the case worse and harder to bear. I want to say that you will find none of these annoyances and vexations in the BROOKS APPLIANCE. At least they are reduced to a minimum. This APPLIANCE was made with a view to eliminate, to do away with, just such trouble. I would have been foolish to work half a lifetime, thinking out and perfecting a thing that had no advantage or was not better than scores of other inventions upon the market. In my APPLIANCE you will find the old objectionable features LEFT OUT. You will find it easy to wear. You will scarcely realize that you are wearing it. There is no binding, drawing and slipping out of place. It does its work effectively and with comfort to the wearer. I want you to read my book, in which I have taken pains to give full particulars about it. Then, there are a few letters printed in it—selected at random from among hundreds written by men and women who have been cured. You write these folks and see what they say. If I were you I would see to this matter without waiting. You can put off some things without running much risk, bu a rupture is a dangerous proposition to neglect. A rupture is not only bad and serious of itself, but it leads to things infinitely worse. Fill out coupon and mail TODAY. Tomorrow will do, but today is better.



The above is C. E. Brooks of Marshall, Mich., the Inventor, who has been curing rupture for over 30 years. If ruptured write him today.

If you have tried most everything else, come to me. Where others fail is where I have my greatest success. Send attached coupon today and I will send you free my illustrated book on rupture and its cure, showing my Appliance and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and were cured. It is instant relief when all others fail. Remember, I use no salves, no harness, no lies.

I send on trial to prove what I say is true. You are the judge and once having seen my illustrated book and read it you will be as enthusiastic as my hundreds of patients whose letters you may also read. Fill out free coupon below and mail today. It's well worth your time whether you try my appliance or not.

Don't Make The Child Wear a Truss Through Life

I Want to Reach the Parents of Every Ruptured Child in the Country

The Truss Is a Flesh Torturing Invention Fit Only As a Relic of Barbarity.

I want them to know about the Automatic Air Cushion Rupture Appliance that I make for children who are afflicted in this way.

The Brooks Appliance Cured His Rupture. Now He Is As Sound and Whole As If He Had Never Been Ruptured.

My appliance can be put on any child with perfect safety to the little one. For growing children there is nothing better to be had—no matter how much you pay—than my Appliance. I want the parents or others who may have children in their care to understand that there should be no delay in getting proper help for ruptured children.

Every day that the rupture is allowed to go on without the right means of correcting it—just so much harder will it be for the child to get rid of it.

No ruptured child can ever be free from the thought of the rupture and it is not fair to any child not to have an equal chance with other children. No matter what we may wish to think—ruptured children do **not** have an equal chance.

Common trusses do not help.

Thousands of men and women know that from their own experience with such trusses.

But it is not necessary for children to wear harsh, cumbersome, steel trusses any more.

You may have had to wear something like this but don't make your child do it. Give the child something better.

My Appliance is better and I want to prove it to you.

I will make an Appliance to the child's measure, send it on TRIAL—put it into your hands to see and use and then you can say whether it is what I claim or not.

The Automatic Air Cushion conforms with every movement of the child; there is an even, gentle pressure which gradually binds the broken parts together—as you would bind a broken limb—and then no matter how much the child jumps, runs, rolls over or falls down—the pressure is kept up just the same—always drawing the parts together.

Write me today and get all the information—send the coupon.

Others Failed But the Appliance Cured

C. E. Brooks, Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:—

Your Appliance did all you claim for the little boy and more, for it cured him sound and well. We let him wear it for about a year in all, although it cured him 3 months after he had begun to wear it. We had tried several other remedies and got no relief, and I shall certainly recommend it to friends, for we surely owe it to you. Yours respectfully,

WM. PATTERSON.
No 717 S. Main St., Akron, Ohio.

Pennsylvania Man Thankful

Mr. C. E. Brooks, Marshall, Mich.
Dear Sir:—

Perhaps it will interest you to know that I have been ruptured six years and have always had trouble with it till I got you Appliance. It is very easy to wear, its neat and snug, and is not in the way at anytime, day or night. In fact, at times I did not know I had it on; it just adapted itself to the shape of the body and seemed to be a part of the body, as it clung to the spot, no matter what position I was in.

It would be a veritable God-send to the unfortunates who suffer from rupture if all could procure the Brooks Rupture Appliance and wear it. They would certainly never regret it.

My rupture is now all healed up and nothing ever did it but your Appliance. Whenever the opportunity presents itself I will say a good word for your Appliance, and also the honorable way in which you deal with ruptured people. It is a pleasure to recommend a good thing among your friends or strangers, I am,

Yours very sincerely,
JAMES A. BRITTON.
80 Spring St., Bethlehem, Pa.

Remember

I send my Appliance on trial to prove what I say is true. You are to be the judge. Fill out free coupon below and mail today.

Ten Reasons Why

You Should Send for Brooks' Rupture Appliance

1. It is absolutely the only Appliance of the kind on the market today, and in it are embodied the principals that inventors have sought after for years.
2. The Appliance for retaining the rupture cannot be thrown out of position.
3. Being an air cushion of soft rubber it clings closely to the body, yet never blisters or causes irritation.
4. Unlike the ordinary so-called pads, used in other trusses, it is not cumbersome or ungainly.
5. It is small, soft and pliable, and positively cannot be detected through the clothing.
6. The soft, pliable bands holding the Appliance do not give one the unpleasant sensation of wearing a harness.
7. There is nothing about it to get foul, and when it becomes soiled it can be washed without injuring it in the least.
8. There are no metal springs in the Appliance to torture one by cutting and bruising the flesh.
9. All of the material of which the Appliances are made is of the very best that money can buy, making it a durable and safe Appliance to wear.
10. My reputation for honesty and fair dealing is so thoroughly established by an experience of over thirty years of dealing with the public, and my prices are so reasonable, my terms so fair, that there certainly should be no hesitancy in sending free coupon today.

Cured at the Age of 76

Mr. C. E. Brooks, Marshall, Mich.,
Dear Sir:—

I began using your Appliance for the cure of rupture (I had a pretty bad case) I think in May, 1905. On November 20, 1905, I quit using it. Since that time I have not needed or used it. I am well of rupture and rank myself among those cured by the Brooks Discovery, which, considering my age, 76 years, I regard as remarkable. Very sincerely yours,

SAM A. HOOVER. Jamestown, N. C.

Child Cured in Four Months

Brooks Rupture Appliance Co.

Gentlemen:—The baby's rupture is altogether cured, thanks to your appliance and we are so thankful to you. If we could only have known of it sooner our little boy would not have had to suffer near as much as he did. He wore your brace a little over four months and has not worn it now for six weeks.

Yours very truly,
ANDREW EGGENBERGER.
21 Jansen St., Dubuque, Iowa.

Recommend From Texas Farmer

Brooks Rupture Appliance Co.,
Marshall, Mich.
Gentlemen:—

I feel it my duty to let you, and also all people afflicted as I was, know what your Appliance has done for me. I have been ruptured for many years and have worn many different trusses, but never got any relief until I got your Appliance. I put it on last November, but had very little faith in it, but must say I am now cured. I have laid it away—have had it off for two weeks and doing all kinds of farm work with ease. While I was wearing it, I had la grippe and coughed a great deal but it held all right. Words cannot express my gratitude towards you and your Appliance. Will recommend it to all ruptured people. Yours sincerely,

J. E. LONG. Bald Prairie, Texas.

FREE INFORMATION COUPON

C. E. BROOKS, 119A Brooks' Bldg., Marshall, Mich.

Please send me by mail in plain wrapper your illustrated book and full information about your Appliance for the cure of rupture.

Name ....

City ....

R. F. D. .... State ....